can produce more goods without significantly increasing labor costs. Possible expansion of state commerce extension services have been considered. Ways to increase marine productivity have been suggested, including a scheme to build ocean platforms that would act as bases for sea-floor development and as shipping transfer points.

► *Health care.* Drug abuse is a likely subject for mention. Also health delivery systems, long the pet dream of a certain segment of the electronics industry, could receive a boost. Or engineering aids to the disabled such as prosthetic devices, or special aids to the deaf and blind, or increasing the nutritional value of foods might merit approval.

► *Technology for meeting air quality standards economically.* Clean energy has long been a sacrosanct goal of the environment movement. Various projects are possible, such as the linking of four Chicago incinerators to a comprehensive system in which urban solid waste would be recycled. Power generation through the gasification of high-sulfur fuel has also been proposed.

► *Protection from natural disasters.* Prediction and early detection of earthquakes is likely, as well as detection and control methods for forest and other kinds of fires. Still other possibilities include building more airplanes for improvement in weather modification and control, and warning systems for floods and landslides.

► *Transportation.* An obvious range of transportation projects would involve utilizing NASA's capabilities and applying them to such things as urban transit systems. The President may even count the space shuttle as a new technology initiative. Of course, there is speculation that Magruder might include the SST in the new technology plan. Anything can happen.

► *Communications for social needs.* Under this heading come a number of telecommunications proposals: automated teaching devices, domestic and global satellite systems, and something called "the wired city" in which communications are so perfected that the alarmed citizen, by pressing a button on his phone, indicates to the police exactly where a crime is being committed.

► *Natural resources.* Various proposals for the development or increase of key minerals and fuels fall into this category. Included are a plan to aid the recovery of alumina (now imported from Canada, Africa, and other places) from U.S. clay to lower the cost

Briefing

Cancer Crusade

"I hope that in the years ahead that we look back on this day and this action shown as being the most significant action taken during this Administration." So declared President Nixon 2 days before Christmas in signing into law the National Cancer Act, the basis for what Nixon called "our great crusade against cancer." Leaders of the crusade, who will control an important slice of the country's biomedical research funds, are now being selected by the White House and will probably be announced within the next few weeks.

Candidates for the directorship of the expanded National Cancer Institute (NCI) have been narrowed down to three or four people, including the present NCI Director Carl G. Baker. But at least one former front-runner, R. Lee Clark of the M. D. Anderson Institute at Houston, is reported to have lost interest in the job because the new legislation does not accord the NCI the degree of independence from the National Institutes of Health that was at one time envisioned.

Another disincentive that the new director will have to live with is the two separate oversight bodies created by the act—a three-man President's Cancer Panel and a 23-man National Cancer Advisory Board. The relation between these two bodies does not yet seem to have been precisely worked out, but neither is intended to play a purely cosmetic role in the NCI's affairs. The three-man panel is obliged by law to meet 12 times a year and to report back directly to the President. The National Cancer Advisory Board (which replaces the National Advisory Cancer Council) includes as ex officio members the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, the director of the Office of Science and Technology, and the director of the National Institutes of Health.

Chairman of the presidential panel is Benno C. Schmidt, a New York businessman who headed the Senate-appointed panel on cancer, which provoked the new legislation. The two other triumvirs have yet to be appointed, but one is expected to be a research scientist and the other a doctor. Over and above its statutory authorities, which include making an annual report to the President and informing him of any delays or blockages in the crusade as they occur, the panel is expected to serve as a bridge between cancer research and private industry. There are expected to be substantial opportunities for profit in the new cancer effort; even at the present (fiscal 1972) level of expenditure, firms such as Microbiological Associates and Bionetics Research Laboratories, both in the Washington, D.C., area, have contracts worth more than $5 million with the NCI.

Another function envisaged for the three-man panel is to serve as a court of appeal for scientists outside the NCI. A staff aide to Representative Paul G. Rogers (D–Fla.), chairman of the subcommittee that wrote the new cancer act, says of the panel: "You can't bitch to the [National Advisory Cancer] Council because they run the program. But the panel will be a court of appeal, a confessor to whom scientists will be able to complain with impunity."

The 23-man National Cancer Advisory Board is also destined for close involvement in the impending crusade. A White House aide says he sees the board as acting like the board of directors of a private corporation and playing a much stronger role than does the existing council. Membership of the board will consist of scientists, doctors, and representatives of the general public.

All members of the director-panel-board hierarchy are presidential appointees and will presumably have a major voice in deciding the tactics and strategy to guide the foot soldiers of the biomedical community in the new crusade.—N.W.