

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Senator Ribicoff believes in a balanced program of traffic safety. He has long supported driver training and vehicle inspection programs as practical steps which can directly reduce the traffic death and injury tolls.

Senator Ribicoff believes traffic safety must be a cooperative effort joined in by every level of government and private organizations. These voluntary groups make a major contribution toward reducing traffic accidents.

Hearings, Legislation

In 1965 and 1966, Senator Ribicoff conducted hearings on traffic safety. Then, in June, 1965, he introduced the first comprehensive traffic safety bill in the Senate. This safety measure, coupled with the Ribicoff hearings, served as the foundation for the Traffic Highway Safety Acts of 1966.

SECOND COLLISION: Senator Ribicoff's hearings focused public attention on traffic safety. For the first time the "second collision" was clearly explained and its consequences spelled out. The "second collision" is the collision between the passengers and the interior of the car. It occurs a split second after the accident--and is the major cause of injury to accident victims.

'ANATOMY': Senator Ribicoff dramatized his hearings by developing "the anatomy of an accident," a step-by-step unfolding of the factors leading up to an auto wreck. "Anatomy" dispelled the myth that all accidents are the fault of the driver--and demonstrated that car defects and poorly constructed and designed roads are also causes of accidents.

DEFECTS: The investigation into automobile defects opened a new dimension in the study of traffic safety. This inquiry revealed that 18.5

Traffic Safety

percent of the cars produced between 1960 and 1966--8.7 million vehicles--had been recalled by the manufacturers to correct suspected defects.

STRENGTHENS SAFETY ACTS: When the administration-sponsored traffic safety legislation was presented to Congress in 1966, Senator Ribicoff fought to strengthen it. He secured the incorporation of several important amendments, including mandatory motor vehicle safety standards within one year after enactment of the law and authority to construct and test prototype safe cars.

COST OF SAFETY DEVICES: In 1968, Senator Ribicoff held hearings on the cost of safety devices auto makers were installing in new cars. There had been concern that these new safety devices were priced disproportionately to their value. In response to this concern, Senator Ribicoff introduced legislation requiring the auto industry to provide detailed price information regarding each new safety standard.

SAFETY PATROL WEEK: Senator Ribicoff believes private, voluntary groups make a major contribution toward reducing traffic accidents. To accord one of these groups recognition, he introduced legislation to designate the second week in May, 1968 as National School Safety Patrol Week to honor the thousands of youngsters throughout the nation who assist their classmates at street crossings on the way to and from school. Senator Ribicoff worked with the National Safety Council and the Triple A (American Automobile Association) and other safety groups in passing this legislation.