

# Schwartz Ouster Halted POW Talks

By Drew Pearson

Ever since Abba Schwartz was euchered out of the State Department, U.S. officials have been unable to complete the arrangements he started for the International Red Cross to visit American prisoners held in North Vietnam.

Even Under Secretary of State Averell Harriman, who Pearson tried to pick up the negotiations where Schwartz left off, has failed.

The tragedy is that Schwartz had almost arranged for Red Cross visits when he was forced out of Government by the backstage efforts of Sens. James Eastland, Miss., and Tom Dodd, Conn., with an assist from Rep. Mike Feighan, Ohio, all Democrats.

Schwartz even secured a promise from the Russians that in return for the release of certain Communist prisoners in the United States they would try to get American prisoners in North Vietnam returned home. Instead it now looks as if these Americans could be executed.

## Less Highway Safety

If there are more crashes on the highways, as may happen as a result of weakening the auto safety bill in the House of Representatives, it

will be partly the fault of two Congressmen who usually vote miles apart. They are:

Walter Rogers of Pampa, Tex., who has gone to bat for the cigarette lobby, for Madison Avenue, the big TV networks, and who is generally considered an anti-public Congressman.

John Dingell of Detroit, who has battled for little business, against the networks, against the cigarette lobby, against Madison Avenue and is generally considered a pro-public Congressman. Both are Democrats.

Both are also against the safety of the public and for the auto industry in the case of the auto safety bill—Rogers because he is usually against the public anyway; Dingell because he comes from Dearborn, Mich.

In his district, home of Ford's largest factory, more than half of the people are employed in the manufacture of cars, accessories, or spare parts. So Dingell is lining up where the votes are. Knowing this, the automobile lobbyists have called on him to introduce several undermining amendments.

"They haven't pressured me a bit," the young Congressman from Detroit says, "and their amendments have been quite reasonable."

It's quite true the auto lobby hasn't pressured Dingell; its members are smart. They know they already have Dingell in their pocket.

They have also been smart in introducing amendments. They pass them around among different congressional friends, so that each one appears innocuous. But when added together they seriously undermine the strength of the auto safety bill. Also Dingell is a bit naive, doesn't understand the legal technicalities of safety legislation, with the result that he and Rep. Rogers of Texas have been the No. 1 gutters of safety on the highways.

Here is part of what they have been doing.

## Gutting Safety

The Congressman from Pampa, Tex., has been watering down the civil liability of the auto manufacturers by inserting a "due care" provision. Under this, even if the industry violated the safety standards set by the Secretary of Commerce, it would not be subject to civil penalty if it could show that it exercised due care.

The Congressman from Dearborn has been trying to water down the Government's enforcement remedies. Thus, if Dingell has his way, if the Government wanted to bring

an injunction to stop a company from manufacturing an unsafe car, it would have to sit down with the company and confer before bringing the suit. With every other industry, such as food and drug, where the public safety is involved the Government can go into court in one day or a few hours.

Another Rogers, Paul G., of Palm Beach, Fla., is also trying to weaken the auto safety bill by setting up an advisory council so stacked with industry men that Secretary of Commerce John Connor, a former director of General Motors, has rebelled against it.

The council would be composed of four members from industry, two from auto equipment manufacturers, two from auto research, and four from public and private organizations, of which two must be from the Equipment and Safety Commission, an industry-stacked organization.

## Champions of Safety

Definitely on the side of the public are Torbert Macdonald, Mass., John Moss, Calif., and James Mackay of Georgia. They have been trying to reinstate the criminal provisions which the Senate knocked out, also are pushing for full disclosure to compel the auto industry to give car buyers safety information regarding the road-worthiness of a car and its crash-worthiness.