

# ABAA TRADE SHOW AND CONVENTION

displaying their wares. In addition to the displays business management seminars were held through the four day meeting.

Senator Phillip A. Hart, Democrat-Michigan, the featured speaker, took the industry to task for what he called "institutionalized deceit." He felt that the insurance companies, body shop owners and managers were at fault for the problems that beset the industry today. He discussed the problem of insurance discounts and how they force the body shops to charge for work that isn't done. He said that some companies are "using boycotts" to gain price discounts. The Senator said that the shortage of skilled mechanics is working against the interests of the consumer. He mentioned that the new autos are coming on the markets at a rate far faster than mechanics. For every nine men who enter the field 13 leave it. Hart also pointed out the problems with flat rate manuals saying they prescribe the precise time allowed for a job. And, mechanics who split the charges with the shop owner will try to beat the book and charge for time not actually spent. Even with this going on he said the average pay for an American mechanic is well below that paid other skilled tradesmen.

Other highlights included a meeting conducted by Reg Predham in which he described his foreign travels and global concepts of the auto body repair industry. Representatives from many of the free-world governments were in attendance. Norman Cohen delivered a speech covering the many facets of auto body franchising.

New ABAA officers were elected for 1970: Paul Goldberg, Hartford, Conn. was named President; Ralph Engle, Ephrata, Penn. First Vice President; Vince Freccia, Stamford, Conn. Second Vice President and two

familiar faces Irv Fein, Newark, N. J. and George Threlfall, East Paterson, N. J. were re-elected to their positions as Treasurer and Secretary.

Paul Goldberg said that in a very few years the ABAA has made many great strides and now they do not intend to rest at this point as there is much to be done in the industry. With the co-operation of the board and members the organization will continue to grow in number and achievements. Mr. Goldberg said the group will closely follow all local and national legislation.

Project GRIPE was reviewed at a special meeting during the convention. Featured speakers were Rufus E. Wilson, Chief Division of General Trade Restraint of the FTC and William C. McCamant, legislative representative for GRIPE. Wilson said the FTC is compiling bi-monthly reports of the wholesale compensation plan and will continue to do this in their study of the co-operation dealers are giving to the wholesale plan. McCamant told the group that General Motors has recognized several factors in the pricing of parts: regard for competition; cost of producing and distributing; adequate profits for dealers and distributors; and equities of the consumer in relation to value of the product.

The following contributions were made to GRIPE at the end of the meeting: Independent Garage Owners of America, \$4,000; Auto Body Association of America, \$2,566; Independent Garagemen's Association of Texas, \$500; California Auto Body Association, \$300 and ABAA affiliates in Massachusetts and Connecticut each contributed \$500. The last two contributions will be applied to ABAA's quarterly GRIPE contribution.

When the show closed Sunday it had been attended by approximately 3000 people.

The Auto Body Association Of America held its fourth annual auto body trade show and convention in Detroit October 30 through November 2, 1969. This show was probably the association's most successful yet with approximately 60 manufacturers