

# BRITISH SAFETY COUNCIL



(Constituted as a non-profit making association)  
SAFETY HOUSE - 60, WESTBOURNE GROVE  
LONDON - W.2.

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LDH/HP

12th May 1960.

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(Past and Present)

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BANKERS:  
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Dear Madam,

In a motoring collision, the main cause of injury to the car occupant is being thrown upwards and forwards and receiving a blow on the head, or a driver hitting his chest against the windscreen.

World-wide tests have proved that the use of car safety belts would eliminate well over 50 per cent of these injuries.

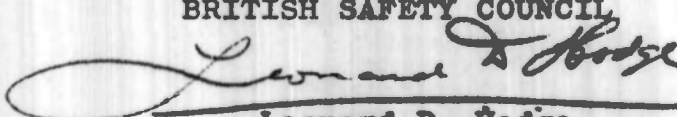
Realising the vital need to convince motorists of this, the Council is to stage demonstrations in Regents Park on three consecutive Wednesday afternoons - May 18th and 25th and June 1st, between 2.30 and 5.30 p.m.

We enclose invitations to the launching of these demonstrations. Well-known motoring personalities have been invited; and members of the public, and celebrities from many walks of life, will be invited to ride in the demonstration cars and prove for themselves the effectiveness of the belts under accident conditions of violent braking at speed.

The demonstrations are part of a campaign which the Council has been conducting since February, 1959, when its Chairman, Mr. James Tye, published the first-ever report on seat belts in this country.

They come at an opportune time, immediately before Whitsun, and it is hoped they will help to avert another holiday weekend bloodbath.

Yours faithfully,  
BRITISH SAFETY COUNCIL

  
Leonard D. Hodge  
NATIONAL DIRECTOR.

AN ORGANISATION DEDICATED TO SAVE LIVES

? 9 - 5x  
Wednes day  
but well

THE BRITAX SAFETY BELT

The Britax Safety Belt, with its unique single diagonal strap, is now available in Great Britain for the first time. It was originally developed five years ago, by the Swedish State Power Board in Stockholm, in order to reduce injuries to their employees.

Largely due to considerable Government support, safety belts are now used in approximately 60% of all cars in Sweden. Nearly 90% of these belts - one million in all - are of the single diagonal strap design. In 1959 over 300,000 of this type of belt were sold in Sweden. 160,000 new cars were registered during the same period.

There are hundreds of known cases where such safety belts have saved life and injury. Some of these appear in the attached extract from "A Memorandum Concerning Automobile Safety Belts". Experts estimate that the universal use of car safety belts in Great Britain could well reduce deaths and injuries by about 60% - a saving of 72,000 deaths and injuries in a year.

The Britax type Safety Belt is approved by road safety authorities in many countries and by Volvo and Saab in Sweden and by Mercedes and Volkswagen in Germany. In Great Britain the Britax Belt is approved by the British Safety Council, and a Standard is shortly to be published by the British Standards Institution.

Discussions are now taking place with major British car manufacturers, who have shown considerable interest in the design of the Britax Belt. The Ministry of Transport has also shown interest in the use of car safety belts.

The Britax Safety Belt is backed by years of use under normal road conditions. A constant interchange of views and experience between the manufacturers in Sweden, Germany, the U.S.A., and Great Britain ensures that full use is made of new materials, techniques

and designs.

Three of the five years spent in developing the Britax Safety Belt were employed in finding and producing the ideal type of webbing. During this time different types of accidents and injuries to car travellers were examined, and the tolerance of human bodies to restraining mechanisms analysed. As a result, a graph was produced showing the qualities required for the ideal safety belt webbing. The webbing which had the properties of strength and controlled stretch closest to the theoretical requirements was made from high tenacity 'Terylene' yarn.

'Terylene' also has good resistance to chemical attack, high wet and dry strength and resistance to heat, sunlight and rotting. Finally, 'Terylene' webbing is easy to clean.



## BRITAX SAFETY BELT - SPECIFICATION

### 1. BUCKLE

Positive metal-to-metal locking action.

Buckle is of quick release type.

Cannot be imperfectly or incorrectly locked.

Incorporates simple adjuster for length of belt.

Slip through adjuster at 1,500 lbs. is NIL.

Buckle withstands impact loads of 6,000 lbs.

Chrome plated for long life and good appearance.

### 2. WEBBING

Is of 'Terylene' and has all the 'long life' characteristics normally associated with it.

Will take loads of over 3,000 lbs.

Elongation at 2,250 lbs. is approximately 22.5%.

Rate of recovery after large loads is designed to prevent any possibility of a dangerous 'whiplash' action.

### 3. MOUNTING BRACKETS

Specially formed for maximum strength and perfect fit.

Each mounting bracket has a special 'saddle' to avoid any possibility of the webbing coming into contact with rough surfaces.

Supported by concealed reinforcement plates of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " tensile steel with surface area of over 4 sq. ins.

Mounting brackets secured through car body to reinforcement plates with  $\frac{3}{8}$ " bolts.

The complete assembly will withstand loop loads of over 4,000 lbs.

## SAFETY BELTS

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Q. In what order do injuries occur most frequently in a car accident?
- A. Head and facial.....73%      Arms..... 30%  
Legs.....47%      Abdomen, Pelvis  
Chest & Thoracic Spine.37%      and Lumbar Spine..... 16%  
Neck & Cervical  
Spine..... 7%
- Q. Why have car manufacturers in this country been reluctant to fit and publicise seat belts?
- A. Because no manufacturer wishes to have a negative thought concerning the safety of his car discussed at the time the car is being sold. Any manufacturer who does this is at a disadvantage with his competitors.
- Q. Should car manufacturers move in concert in this matter, then?
- A. This is the only way that safety belts can be fitted in new cars.
- Q. In the event of a crash, is the possibility of being ejected exaggerated?
- A. Two surveys reveal that  
(a) a study of accidents involving 3,261 cars and 7,000 passengers, showed that 14% of the occupants were ejected.  
(b) Another study showed that 55% of car doors opened, and 47% of the passengers were ejected.
- Q. How is it that some drivers and passengers thrown clear in a crash are able to walk away uninjured?
- A. The results of crashes are unpredictable. Children have fallen from great heights without injury. Spidermen have fallen from 150 feet also without injury. These are exceptions to the rule. Studies of hundreds of accidents show that the odds are heavily against this happening.
- Q. What is the major cause of injury within the car?
- A. 1. Steering Assembly      4. Top Back of Front Seat  
2. Instrument Panel      5. Door Structure  
3. Windscreen      6. Bottom of Back of Front Seat.
- Q. Is the seat belt likely to trap you in the car when there is a risk of fire or drowning?
- A. No. B.S.C. approved belts are fitted with quick release buckles. If you are too badly injured to operate the release buckle it is not likely that you would be able to crawl out of the car anyway.
- Q. Do seat belts give some drivers a false sense of security?
- A. The sensible driver will not drive like a maniac just because he has a belt. On the other hand bad drivers will drive badly with or without a safety belt.
- Q. Are there any organisations in overseas countries advocating the use of safety belts?
- A. Yes. In the U.S.A. and Sweden. In this country, of course, certain county police forces are using safety belts.

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## PRESS RELEASE

### FASTEN YOUR BELTS PLEASE

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In an effort to avoid another Whitsun holiday motorist's blood bath, a public demonstration on the effectiveness of car safety belts is today being held on the "Survival Strip" in Regents Park.

The demonstration which takes place between 2.30 and 5.30 has been organised by the British Safety Council to show individuals of the public the protective qualities of various makes of car safety belts which have been approved by the Council.

9 cars equipped with different types of safety belts have been provided for the event. Members of the public are invited to fasten their belts and join the drivers in test runs involving emergency braking at speed. World racing champion, Jack Brabham, who will open the demonstration will be the first to undergo a test run. He will be followed by the celebrated singer, Anne Shelton. The Council's aim is to highlight the huge life-saving qualities of this simple idea.

World-wide tests have proved conclusively that use of car safety belts would eliminate over 50% of car-users' deaths. In the British Isles alone 700 lives per year could be saved.

The demonstration is part of a campaign which the British Safety Council has been conducting since February 1959. It will be repeated in Regents Park on May 25th and June 1st.