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Legislative limelights

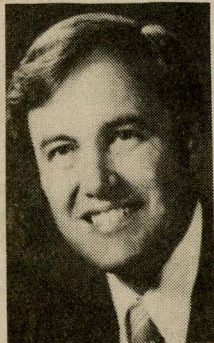
Terry Crapo left rich legislative heritage

By **BEN J. PLASTINO**
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The recent sudden, shocking death of Terry L. Crapo at only 43 years of age recalls his brilliant record in the Idaho Legislature where he served three terms in the Idaho House of Representatives, one of them as the House majority leader.

His tenure extended from 1967 to 1972, the last two sessions as the leader in the lower House.

His distinction in the legislative field was only one of many accomplishments as a law partner in an Idaho Falls law firm, regional LDS Church representatives, president of the Idaho Falls LDS West Stake for eight years, chairman of the Idaho Falls Consolidated Hospitals for three years, a law professor who helped inaugurate the new law college at Brigham Young University and many other activities.



Terry L. Crapo

Crapo can best be remembered in his legislative activities for having reorganized the House by adopting more efficient procedures for committee meetings.

It was Crapo, in spite of his youthfulness — then only 33 — who as majority leader decreed that the major committees meet in the mornings before start of the daily general sessions, leaving the minor committees to convene in the afternoon, after adjournment of the daily sessions. This system has been followed ever since.

Before this, there was no set pattern, and committee meetings were a hodgepodge of scheduling.

For example, the powerful Joint Finance-Appropriation Committee often met at the same time as the daily sessions. As this committee is made up of 20 members — 10 from each chamber — it hampered the general sessions as it took a fifth of the 105 legislative body. Now, this committee meets early in the mornings, beginning at 8 a.m. for two hours, before

breaking up for the general sessions. This is done until it completes setting the various state agency budgets which take up about two-thirds of the session.

These orderly committee meetings have enabled the legislators to accomplish much more work and more speedily.

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Crapo also distinguished himself in many other legislative ways. The veteran press corps voted him the outstanding legislator in his times, not only for his astonishing leadership but in the congenial but forceful manner he debated and his warm relationship with all legislators and members of the press corps.

He sponsored a number of bills directed at pollution control and the funding of pollution control programs, which was far ahead of his time.

He also wrote and sponsored several consumer protection acts, a favorite legislative field of his. As a result, he was named chairman of the Select Committee on the Uniform Consumer Credit Code.

He also was a member of the Legislative Council which sets the policies of the Legislature.

It is with regret that he declined to seek a fourth term because of his legal obligations and head of a household with a wife and four children.

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In contrast with most recent Legislatures, the Republican controlled Legislature under Crapo maintained warm relations with a Democratic governor, who was then Cecil D. Andrus.

He was quoted as saying "I feel the governor and legislators must work together to make our funds go as far as possible. The new governor and most of the legislators agreed there should be no increase in taxes which means we will have to fit our budget in the revenue available. I think this will eliminate bickering."

He then mentioned that in the tax field the primary efforts should be geared to eliminating inequities in the property tax, which is still a prime issue; and give education the top priority, always a perennial concern.

Crapo will go in the records as one of the most outstanding legislators to ever represent Idaho Falls, and for that matter, one of the brightest stars in Idaho legislative annals.