

news

NHTSA

Comparing Notes

Swedish Safety Official Visits NHTSA



Chuck Livingston, Acting Associate Administrator of TSP, greets Perry and Ingrid Hakansson during their recent visit.

Catherine Larsen, who coordinated the arrangements, gives the Hakanssons a run-down of the days' events. →



Perry Hakansson chats with (left to right) Leroy Dunn, Robert Voas and John Moulden between briefings.



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Editor M. J. Noll

October 1977

A recent visit by the Director of Information of the National Society for Road Safety in Sweden gave new meaning to the proverbial saying, "We learn from each other."

At an all-day conference on September 19, Mr. Perry Hakansson was briefed on various TSP programs and public information support. He, in turn, provided NHTSA useful information about Sweden's highway safety and information activities.

Those who made presentations were:

Robert Voas, "Overview of Traffic Safety Programs;"

John Moulden, "Alcohol Programs;"

Richard Frederick, "55 mph Speed Limit and Police Traffic Services;"

George Brandt, "Courts and Adjudication;"

Dwight Fee, "Public Information and Education;"

Leroy Dunn and Gary Butler, "Driver Education" and "Driver Improvement;"

Elaine Weinstein, "Driver Rehabilitation;"

Lewis Buchanan, "Motorcycle Safety;"

William Foulis, "Use of Safety Belts;" and

Lawrence Pavlinski and Katie Moran, "Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety."

From Washington, Mr. Hakansson and his wife will travel to Denver, Colorado, and Phoenix, Arizona, where he will meet with NHTSA regional representatives and state officials.

Arrangements for the visit and meeting were coordinated by Catherine Larsen of TSP.

The Criminal Use of False Identification

by Stuart A. Liner

American television in the 1950's sensationalized the exploits of an individual who helped to combat the real "Big Red Machine" (and I don't mean the Cincinnati Reds). The man's name was Herbert Philbrick and he truly did lead three lives, namely, a private American citizen, a spy for Russia, and a counterspy for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. To successfully accomplish his FBI missions (which were the bases for his weekly successes on television), Herb Philbrick had to frequently change identification. False identification in the name of law and order was and remains a justifiable concept, but false identification in the commission of crimes is not. Yet conservative estimates indicate a widespread use of false birth certificates, drivers' licenses, social security cards, passports, and other credentials in the areas of drug smuggling, illegal immigration, fraud against business, and fraud against government.

The use of false identification is a necessary component for illegal conduct because it gives the criminal the ability to "appear" and "disappear" almost at will and without a trace. Firm statistics on the scope and impact of crimes aided by false identification are difficult to obtain; however, the sparse data available suggests that the criminal



Stuart A. Liner is an attorney in the Licensing and Regulations Branch of TSP's Office of Driver and Pedestrian Programs. He was one of NHTSA's representatives to the Federal Advisory Committee on False Identification (FACFI), and served on several of its task forces.

Mr. Liner came to NHTSA in April 1975 from the Department of Justice in Pennsylvania where, as the Deputy Attorney General, he was a primary author of the completely revised Vehicle Code of the State. Prior to that, he served as Assistant Attorney General for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and was counsel to the Bureau of Traffic Safety and the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. He has also worked as a contracts attorney for the General Accounting Office.

Mr. Liner received a BS in Accounting from Penn State University in 1963, a JD from the Dickinson School of Law in 1966, and Masters of Law degree (LL.M.) from the Georgetown University Law Center in 1976. He is a member of both the Pennsylvania Bar Association and the Federal Bar Association.

This article is an abridgement of his presentation at the Ninth Annual Institute on Motor Vehicle and Traffic Law at the University of Colorado in Boulder on August 17.

use of false identification breeds a multibillion dollar problem in the U.S.

Most types of identification documents are used either to defraud or as "breeder" documents for obtaining further identification to use or falsify. As noted, they include birth certificates, drivers' licenses, pass-

ports, visa and alien identification cards, social security cards, selective services draft cards, voter registration cards, credit cards, and nongovernment identification cards.

The birth certificate is the essential document because it will "breed" the issuance of other

documents, such as the driver's license. How easy is it to obtain? The following facts offer some clues.

U.S. birth certificates are generally kept in local vital records offices, and over 7,000 are authorized to issue certified copies. (A few states issue birth certificates exclusively at the state level.) Approximately 10 million certified copies of birth certificates are issued each year, with over 80 percent of the requests received and processed by mail. Name and return address are usually the only indications of the requestor's identity.

Once a birth certificate has been obtained, the next step is generally to secure a driver's license.

Results of an American Express Company survey showed that the driver's license was the most widely used identification in cashing travelers cheques. The driver's license was presented 77 out of 153 times or 50.3% of the time. The American Express credit card was next, being presented in 20 out of 153 cases or 13% of the time. Therefore, the driver's license must be recognized as the primary form of personal identification for use in commerce and in general transactions between individuals and government.

The national response to this problem was the creation of the Federal Advisory Committee on False Identification in November 1974. The Committee consisted of approximately 75 repre-

sentatives from some 50 agencies (including several from TSP), the commercial sector, and the public.

The Committee's purpose was to conduct a detailed examination into the false identification problem and report on its findings and recommendations. The different phases of investigation included government payments, commercial transactions, fugitives, federal identification documents, and state and local identification documents.

The final report was released in November 1976. Its recommendations included the initiation of such state and local administrative actions as:

Standard application forms for birth certificates requiring the applicant's signature, justification for request, and items of personal history not generally available to imposters.

The matching of birth and death records. At time of death, a notation would be made on the birth certificate of all persons aged 55 years or less.

Requiring independent identification in addition to a certified copy of a birth certificate for driver's license applicants. It should be a type not easily obtained with a recently acquired birth certificate, such as school records, military identification and local references that could be checked by telephone and directory.

Verifying license validity with the former state of residence before issuing a new license. This could be accomplished through

use of the National Driver Register (NDR).

Adoption of tamperproof forms for drivers' licenses that contain a color photograph of the licensee.

The Advisory Committee also recommended that appropriate state and federal legislation be enacted to prohibit the possession, sale and transfer of state and Federal documentation to establish false identification.

One result of this recommendation was the introduction of Senate Bill 1096, which is now under consideration by the Senate Judiciary Committee. This legislation would prohibit the counterfeiting, sale, and transfer of federal or state identification documents. It would also prohibit the use of interstate or foreign commerce, including the mails, to transmit federal or state identity documents known to be false or intended for improper use. Finally, it would prohibit the possession of a false state or federal identity document with knowledge that it is being used or is intended for use in obtaining any official document of the United States.

The bill does not provide for a national identity card system or for an information storage system on the entire national population. The states will still be responsible for issuing the necessary identification documents, but the integrity of these documents, on which every law abiding American citizen depends, will be better protected through this legislation.

Personnel

Welcome Aboard

Eileen T. Leahy,
Attorney-Advisor, OCC,
7-30.

Wanda M. Payne, Clerk-
Typist, RD, 8-7.

Carl L. Ragland, Hwy.
Safety Research Engineer,
RD, 8-14.

'Bye and Good Luck

Barbara Faigen,
Economist, P&E, 6-22.

Daniel Ancona, Elec.
Engineer, TSP, 7-16.

Linda Dockendorf,
Financial Assistant, AD,
8-5.

Congrats on Promotion

Geraldine Coleman,
Contract Specialist, AD,
8-14.

Almeta Hilton, Secre-
tary-DMT, Office of the
Deputy Administrator,
8-14.

Joan Taylor, Clerk-
DMT, TSP, 8-14.

Roger Tilton, Attorney
Advisor, OCC, 8-14.

Job Opening

For complete details,
see the official vacancy
announcements.

Accounting Technician,
GS-525-7, AD. Opens: 9-23,
Closes: 10-13. NHTSA 77-
119.

graffiti

Nothing prevents
our being natural
as much as the desire
to appear so.

Francois,
Duc De La Rochefoucauld



Coordinator for 55 MPH Programs



Fred W. Vetter has recently been named as NHTSA's States' Coordinator for 55 mile per hour programs. In his new post, he will be responsible for focusing public attention on the benefits of the national speed limit in saving lives and conserving fuel; determining public acceptance of the program; communicating with state enforcement officers and citizen and industry group and recommending necessary improvements.

In announcing his appointment, Administrator Joan Claybrook said: "I am personally grateful that we have within our ranks an individual with the ability and experience required for this important mission."

For the past three years, Mr. Vetter has served as Associate Administrator for Traffic Safety Programs. He is a career military officer who started as a Private and rose through the ranks to Brigadier General. He retired from the military in August 1970.

Prior to joining NHTSA

in December 1974, Mr. Vetter served more than three years in various capacities for the State of Delaware. These included Governor's Representative for Highway Safety, Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Highway Safety, Chairman of the Delaware Agency to Reduce Crime, and a member of the Delaware Organized Crime Commission.

Mr. Vetter is a native of Snohomish, Washington. He holds both a BA and MBS, with a major in economics, from George Washington University. He is also a graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Army Commendation



Dan L. Butler, NHTSA Public Affairs Officer and member of the 5th Psychological Operations Group, USAR, was recently awarded the Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service. While serving as Assistant Information Officer of the 97th USARCOM, Dan's contributions to the Public Affairs Program helped further the mission of the Army Reserve and its role within the Defense structure. The 97th USARCOM is headquartered at Ft. Meade, Md. and the 5th PSYOP Group is near Andrews AFB.