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Long Arm Of Highway Patrol Reaches 1,000 Speeders

By a Post-Dispatch Correspondent

JEFFERSON CITY — The state Highway Patrol stopped more than 1,000 vehicles along Interstate 70 on Tuesday, the first day of a renewed effort to enforce the 55 mph speed limit.

The increased enforcement effort is designed to improve compliance with the federally mandated law. Federal officials have said Missouri has one of the worst speed limit enforcement records in the nation. A proposal has been made to withhold federal highway aid from states with poor enforcement records.

The patrol used 73 cars, six planes and two helicopters to help enforce the speed limit between St. Louis and Kansas City. Of those stopped, 730 were issued speeding citations and 341 got warnings.

The increased enforcement effort prompted a protest by two truck drivers, who were stopped after driving their tractor-trailers for 18 miles along the interstate in mid-Missouri at just over the minimum speed limit. They were driving side by side, refusing to let cars pass them. The drivers were charged with obstructing traffic.

The Highway Patrol superintendent, Col. A. R. Lubker, told the Highway Commission Wednesday that authority must be given to assess points against a driver for exceeding the 55-mph limit. Currently, points are assessed only for traveling more than 70 mph. Eight points in 12 months is enough for suspension of a license.

The legislature has been reluctant in the past to assess points for exceeding the 55 mph limit. "If we just had one point between 55 and the old speed limit, it would certainly be a deterrent," Lubker said. "We can't do it with manpower alone. And if we don't enforce the 55 mph limit, there may not be any Interstate to drive on."

Steinkoetter, Wife Plead Innocent

By MARJORIE MANDEL
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

PADUCAH, Ky. — John R. Steinkoetter of St. Louis County and his wife, Leigh Ann, were arraigned of U.S. District Court here today on charges that they planted a bomb in the home of Mrs. Steinkoetter's stepmother.

They appeared this morning before District Judge Edward H. Johnstone, and both pleaded innocent to each of three counts, possessing a bomb, transporting it in interstate commerce, and transporting it with the intent to kill. They had been held in separate custody in the St. Louis area, and were brought to Paducah Wednesday, spending the night in the Paducah city jail.

Steinkoetter asked the judge for a court-appointed attorney. Mrs. Steinkoetter was represented by J. Martin Hadican of St. Louis.

Hadican told the judge that he intended to request a separation of the two defendants' trials. He requested also that the judge reduce Mrs. Steinkoetter's bail from the present $50,000 to $25,000 or release her on her own recognizance. He explained that such a reduction would permit her to return to St. Louis to care for her four children, presently in the custody of relatives.

The prosecutor, U.S. Attorney Albert Jones, opposed bond reduction, telling the court that reuniting Mrs. Steinkoetter with her children "would not be in the best interests of the children."

If convicted, the Steinkoetters could face a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a $10,000 fine on each count.

The federal charges were based on the discovery of a pipe bomb last month in the garage of the Paducah home of Gladys Walden, Mrs. Steinkoetter's stepmother. The bomb, which had been placed in a cassette, never went off because it remained untouched. It had been rigged to explode when it was picked up.

Mrs. Steinkoetter is reported to have told authorities that she traveled to Paducah with her husband last New Year's Eve, and police say that apparently was when the bomb was planted. The existence of the bomb came to light in the aftermath of an incident Feb. 13 at the Steinkoetters' St. Louis County home, where police say Steinkoetter held his wife and children hostage at gunpoint for nearly an hour.

The hostages escaped unharmed, but Steinkoetter has been held in St. Louis County Jail since then on charges growing out of that incident, and on related charges of rape and assault. Mrs. Steinkoetter was arrested after the couple's indictment on the bomb charges last week by a federal grand jury in Louisville. She was being held in the St. Clair County jail at Belleville, Ill.

Meanwhile, federal authorities are continuing their investigation of the bombing March 7 of a station wagon at a Paducah motel in which William Olbhausen, another St. Louisan, was seriously injured.

Although Steinkoetter is not a suspect in the Olbhausen bombing — he was in County Jail at the time — authorities are checking possible links between the two because Steinkoetter was once an employee of the firm Olbhausen works for, St. Louis Ship Co. Steinkoetter was fired in 1976.

Authorities are trying also to link the Olbhausen bombing to three car bombings last fall in St. Louis County. One killed Olbhausen's girl friend, Shirley Marie Flynn, outside their apartment; the other two killed one man and injured another.

Doctors

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to achieve that income level, they raise their fees in order to achieve it."

The study warned that there is little reason for optimism that prices may level off in the future, but offered no recommendations to reverse the trend.

The American Medical Association issued a statement from its Chicago headquarters acknowledging that the council's study "raises some serious questions about physician activities." However, it said that it needed more time to study the report and that it would have a full statement within the next two days.

Americans spent $35 billion for doctors' services in the fiscal year that ended last Sept. 30, compared with $17 billion in 1970, the report said.

The total nationwide medical care bill has now reached $185 billion and comprises more than 8 percent of the country's total economy.

The report said the "primary cause" of rapidly rising doctors' bills since the mid-1960s has been the extraordinary growth in private and public health insurance coverage.

Currently, up to 170 million persons, about 80 percent of the total population, have private health insurance covering doctors' services.

"While increased insurance coverage enabled many people to receive required medical care, it also, to a large extent, exempted physicians' fees from the usually restraining effects of market forces," the report said.

"In a market where about 60 percent of the cost of services is reimbursed a payment mechanism based on a physician determining his own fee can be expected to result in high rates of fee inflation."

Other major points of the study include:

— Doctors dominate the decision-making process of 72 local Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans, the nation's largest health insurance system. For that reason, the plans' board of directors "may be reluctant to confront the local physician community because it is, to a significant extent, dominated by physicians."

— Pathologists and radiologists, whose average annual earnings were estimated to be above $100,000, were the highest-paid specialties.

— Specialties with lower mean earnings included psychiatrists, $41,258; pediatricians, $41,112; and general practitioners, $44,727.

— Each American spends $638 a year on health care, of which $121 goes to doctors.

— There is one doctor for every 565 persons, compared with one for every 719 in 1963. By 1985, that ratio is expected to fall to one for every 430 persons.

The Federal Trade Commission, which has also been looking into rising medical costs, is now considering allowing doctors to advertise so that consumers can compare fees. The FTC says previous prohibitions against physician advertising amount to price fixing.

About 60 percent of the rise in consumer spending on doctors over the last 30 years results from higher fees, the report says. The rest is attributed to population growth and an increase in the number of visits to doctors' offices for an increasing variety of services.

The medical profession is charged in the report with having restricted the number of doctors entering the profession in the past through control of medical education. But that practice no longer exists, the report said.

Doctors' costs have risen but not as rapidly as doctors' income, the report said. Specifically, it noted, doctors appear to have "overreacted" to the threat of malpractice suits in purchasing insurance and that, in any case, the malpractice threat is waning.

The report rejected the contention that a high income is needed to attract new doctors because of the high cost in money and time required for training. It said that the rate of return on investment in medical training is "far in excess of rates of return for educational training in other fields."

The report also pointed out that the fees of doctors did not reflect the supply of doctors. The supply of doctors as a ratio of population has increased substantially since 1970 but fees keep going up just as sharply, the report said. It was noted that physicians' fees tend to be highest in areas such as New York and Los Angeles, where the supply is highest.

Sidney M. Wolfe, director of Public Citizens' Health Research Group, said that the report confirmed that "supply and demand economy are meaningless in our health care system" and called for more stringent remedies.

Drug Council Tries To Stifle Internal Critic

By TERRY GANEY
Jefferson City Correspondent of the Post-Dispatch

JEFFERSON CITY—The Missouri Advisory Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse has adopted a resolution forbidding its members to criticize fellow council members in the press.

The resolution also prohibits members from seeking attorney general's opinions on council activities without the full council's consideration. The measure apparently is aimed at Dr. James D. Dexter of Columbia, the council chairman.

Dexter has asked the attorney general's office to determine if a decision in January to issue a grant violated the state's conflict-of-interest laws. At the time the grant was made, Dexter and another council member, Probate Judge Kenton G. Askren of Cooper County, said other council members might have violated the law by participating in the council's decision to award the grant while at the same time associating with those who receive money or business from the grant.

The grant was $118,000 to the United Labor Committee's Employee Assistance Program. Kenneth Worley, regional director of the United Auto Workers, is the chairman of the Employee Assistance Program and is a council member.

The director of the state Mental Health Department, Dr. C. Duane Hensley, has said he will delay awarding the grant until the attorney general's office issues its ruling.

The resolution was adopted at the council's regular meeting in Kansas City earlier this month. It said, "It is contrary to the spirit of the council's affairs and its membership that communications be made privately by its members to representatives of the news media in such adverse manner as to affect the council or its members adversely as to their character."

It also said no legal opinions should be sought from the attorney general without first discussing the matter at a council meeting, or, when no meeting can be held, with individual council members.

"It is the sense of this council that any member of the council who shall act contrary to these resolutions deserves censure by the council and that the resignation of such an individual as a member of the council should be requested," the resolution said.

The resolution offered by Gerald R. Coughlin of Blue Springs, chairman of the council subcommittee that drafted the resolution in a closed meeting.

"We just felt that anything that was released to the press should be a full expression of the council's opinion rather than giving a personal opinion," Coughlin said. "I also have no business going to the attorney general, holding myself out as a representative of the council."

But Dexter, who was not present when the council adopted the resolution, said he planned to continue to speak publicly on the council's operations. He said he thought the resolution was unconstitutional. "It is in fact the freedom of the press that keeps a large number of people in decision-making positions honest," he said.

The attorney general's office still has Dexter's conflict-of-interest opinion request under consideration. It is expected to issue a ruling within the next few weeks.

Teamster Pension Fund Ex-Employee Indicted

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Justice Department said Wednesday a former employee of the Teamsters' Central States Pension Fund has been indicted and more than a dozen other criminal investigations involving the fund are under way.

John Kenney, deputy assistant attorney general, told a House Ways and Means subcommittee investigating pension funds that details could not be revealed because of grand jury secrecy rules and the need to avoid pretrial and pre-indictment publicity.

Kenney said one indictment has been returned against a former employee of the fund and "we have over a dozen open investigations involving individuals and entities who have had dealings with the pension fund."

In addition, he said, the department is investigating transactions involving the union's health and welfare fund.

Labor Secretary Ray Marshall told the panel a special 12-member Labor Department team is in Miami to investigate employee benefit plans in south Florida.

Marshall declined to provide further details.

Pine Lawn Woman Charged In Death Of Her Husband

Julia M. Black, 50, of the 4800 block of Irving Avenue, Pine Lawn, was charged Wednesday with second-degree murder in the fatal shooting of her husband on Jan. 28.

Mrs. Black was arrested at her home by Pine Lawn police shortly after the warrant was issued. She is in the St. Louis County Jail in Clayton in lieu of $25,000 bond.

Mrs. Black's husband, Joseph, was shot at their home. She told police at the time that he was preparing to go hunting, and a shotgun discharged as she was handing it to him, striking him in the side and killing him.

Police said Wednesday that ballistics tests had indicated that the shot that killed Black was not fired from the shotgun Mrs. Black said she had.

PSC Assistant Resigns In Speaker-Fee Incident

Special to the Post-Dispatch

JEFFERSON CITY — The Missouri Public Service Commission has accepted the resignation of Jim Crenshaw, an administrative assistant.

Crenshaw had been involved in a controversy surrounding the acceptance of $125 in speaker's fees by PSC Commissioner Alberta Slavin, who returned the money or donated it to charity. Crenshaw had said in a statement to a Senate committee that no PSC commissioners had received speaking fees or other gratuities.

But in testimony to the committee, Crenshaw said the PSC chairman, Charles Fraas, had ordered him to withhold notice of any errors in his earlier sworn statement. Fraas denied Crenshaw's statement, after which Crenshaw resigned.

In a closed session Monday, the PSC accepted Crenshaw's resignation. Fraas refused to comment on the discussion.

Guilty Plea In FBI Thefts

CLEVELAND (UPI) — A former FBI file clerk and her husband have pleaded guilty to charges that they sold secret government documents to organized crime figures.

The former clerk, Geraldine M. Rubinowitz, 38, and her husband, Jeffrey, 32, entered the plea to two counts each of bribery in U.S. District Court on Wednesday. The FBI said the couple sold the documents to now-fugitive mobster Anthony "Tony Lib" Liberatore.

Rifle Sales Decision Delayed

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Pentagon committee has postponed for about six weeks a recommendation on whether to expand the sale of surplus M-1 rifles to gun clubs.

Language

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for voluntary compliance from independent agencies, such as the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission, "to preserve their independence." He said he was confident the independents would comply.

The order, designed to streamline federal regulations, had been circulated publicly in draft form. Carter said it was the first time a presidential executive order had been published for comment before being issued, something which is required by law for regulations issued by agencies below the White House level.

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