

CLASSIC AMERICAN

Driving the American Dream

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'67 SHELBY

STEPPING UP THE SVA FIGHT

AMERICAN CAR CLUBS AND BUSINESSES SHOW THEIR FANGS

SATURDAY February 5th, saw a meeting coordinated by the AIAA (American Import Agents Association) at the Forte Post House on the M6 near Birmingham. As any General will tell you, the secret of a successful campaign is good organisation; the aim of this meeting was to not only inform those attending of the history of SVA and where it is up to now, but also to hammer out a consensus on a plan of action.

Now entering its third year, SVA and the more recent Enhanced SVA have been a thorn in the side of the American car scene, threatening a stranglehold on the import of all American cars under three-years old and, more recently, under ten-years old. Chairing the meeting was Paul Strudwick, an engineer by trade and the AIAA's technical expert. Outlining the whole nature of SVA, including its contradictions and more particularly its threats to the American car scene was Tony Cohen, chief spokesperson for the AIAA.

Additional speakers included Harry Tune, CEO of the AAC, who raised the spectre of the recent introduction of legislation which now makes it necessary for drivers of all motorhomes over seven tonnes to have an HGV licence. Previously this had not been the case, and owners of said vehicles who had happily and safely been driving them for several years suddenly found themselves faced with the dilemma of either selling up or taking an HGV test. This particular instance was an excellent example of 'steam roller legislation', which with coordinated protest could well have been challenged, if not stopped entirely.

This sad little episode should serve as a

warning for all of us in the American car scene; sitting back and assuming that someone else will do the work for us to save it from an untimely bureaucratic execution just won't work. The only people who can, and will save us is us. For that reason representatives from Motorvatin' USA, the Classic Corvette Club UK, the Mustang Owners Club GB,



the North West American Auto Club, Cadillac Owners Club, the Pre-'50 AAC and the NASCC were all invited to attend. The message now has to be taken to grass roots level and the best way to do that is through the clubs.

Whilst the AIAA have done the groundwork and made available not inconsiderable finances for lawyers, technical research and so forth, none of this is effective alone without the wholesale support of American car enthusiasts. So now it is the clubs' turn; the hope is that a trickle-down of information and a plan of action coordinated by the AIAA will enable the American car scene as a whole to present a united front to those wishing to undermine the scene and outlaw our cars.

'SVA DOESN'T AFFECT ME; I'M ONLY INTERESTED IN OLDER AMERICAN CARS'

Wrong. Many of the businesses which supply parts, provide insurance and service our older American cars also are kept in business by newer American cars. Seeing that business dry up could well make these businesses no longer viable. It's in everyone's interest to ensure that no

restrictions are placed on newer American cars coming into the UK.

There can be no doubt that the letters you have written to your MPs and MEPs, as well as the Department of Transport have had an effect on the progress of this legislation; the crucial thing at this stage is to keep the pressure on. For that reason we would urge every reader to write to their MP, MEP and the DETR calling for an exemption from Enhanced SVA for left-hand drive, low volume import American vehicles.

Make sure your voice is heard, write to your MP, your MEP and also the DETR at the following address:

John Jeyes
Department of Transport and the Regions
Vehicle Standards and Engineering
Zone 2/01
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0171 676 2094/ Fax: 0171 676 2069
e-mail: rvs1.detr@gtnet.gov.uk

For more information on what you can do to fight enhanced SVA call either Tony Cohen on 0181 889 4545 or Paul Strudwick on 01869 244483



TONY COHEN & PAUL STRUDWICK