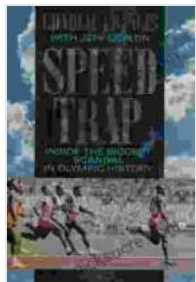


# Speed Trap Charlie Francis: The Notorious Traffic Cop Who Terrorized California



## Speed Trap by Charlie Francis

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2320 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 320 pages  
Lending : Enabled



In the annals of American law enforcement, few names evoke as much infamy as Speed Trap Charlie Francis. As a traffic officer for the California Highway Patrol (CHP) from 1953 to 1970, Francis became notorious for his aggressive tactics and relentless pursuit of speeding drivers. His actions sparked widespread outrage and ignited a fierce debate over the use of excessive force by police officers.

## Early Life and Career

Charles Edward Francis was born on May 22, 1923, in Indianapolis, Indiana. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II and later attended college, where he studied criminal justice. After graduating, he joined the CHP in 1953 and was assigned to the Los Angeles area.

Francis quickly gained a reputation as a zealous and uncompromising officer. He patrolled a stretch of highway near Beaumont, California, which was notorious for speeding and accidents. Francis would often set up radar traps in inconspicuous locations and write hundreds of citations per day.

### **Aggressive Tactics and Brutality**

However, Francis's methods went far beyond issuing tickets. He was known for his confrontational approach, often stopping drivers for minor violations and subjecting them to humiliating and degrading treatment. Francis would routinely use his baton to strike drivers, break their windows, and even tow away their cars.

Francis's excessive force and verbal abuse became the subject of numerous complaints and lawsuits. In one particularly infamous incident, he pulled over a female driver for speeding and allegedly beat her with his baton, causing severe injuries.

### **Controversy and Outrage**

Francis's actions sparked widespread outrage among California motorists and civil rights activists. They accused him of violating their constitutional rights and abusing his authority. The CHP initially defended Francis, claiming that his tactics were necessary to deter speeding and prevent accidents.

However, the mounting pressure from the public and the media eventually forced the CHP to take action. In 1968, Francis was demoted to a desk job and banned from patrolling the highways.

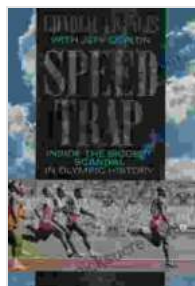
### **The Legacy of Speed Trap Charlie Francis**

Charlie Francis retired from the CHP in 1970 and lived a relatively quiet life until his death in 1984. His legacy, however, continues to haunt law enforcement agencies to this day.

The controversy surrounding Francis's actions helped to raise awareness of the issue of police brutality and excessive force. It also led to reforms in the CHP's traffic enforcement policies and the development of stricter guidelines for the use of force by police officers.

While some may argue that Francis's methods were justified and necessary to protect public safety, the overwhelming consensus is that his actions constituted a gross abuse of power and a violation of the rights of citizens.

Speed Trap Charlie Francis remains a cautionary tale about the dangers of unchecked police authority and the importance of protecting individual rights. His legacy serves as a reminder that law enforcement officers must always operate within the bounds of the law and treat citizens with respect and dignity.



### **Speed Trap** by Charlie Francis

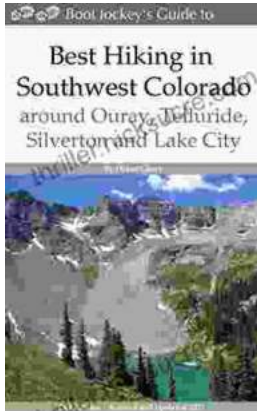
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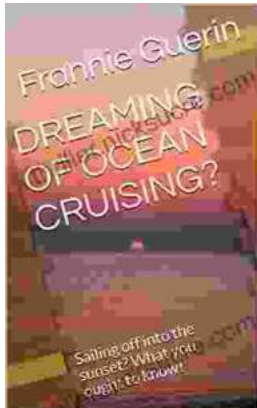
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