

News Release



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
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Nevada man charged with attempting to smuggle machine gun parts into the U.S. hidden in imported Porsche

LOS ANGELES – A Nevada man was arraigned in federal court here yesterday for allegedly attempting to smuggle parts for a World War II-era submachine gun into the United States hidden inside a late-model sports car he was importing from Germany.

Peter Scharf, 43, was arrested yesterday in Los Angeles by agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). The Henderson, Nev., man was indicted earlier this month by a federal grand jury on smuggling charges and for importing a machine gun without a license.

The federal investigation began in October after officers with U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Anti-Terrorism Contraband Enforcement Team found parts for a Thompson submachine gun concealed in the trunk of Scharf's 2002 Porsche 911 Turbo, which was being off-loaded at the Port of Long Beach. The parts, wrapped in blue cloth, included assemblies for the weapon's trigger, bolt, and barrel mechanisms. CBP alerted ICE and ATF about the discovery, triggering the ensuing investigation.

"This is another example of the outstanding work being done by our colleagues at Customs and Border Protection to prevent the smuggling of potentially dangerous contraband through our ports," said Robert Schoch, special agent in charge for the ICE office of investigations in Los Angeles. "The trafficking of weapons and weapons parts poses a significant safety and security risk. ICE is working closely with its law enforcement partners to bring those responsible to justice, whether the suspects are individuals or criminal organizations."

"ATF continues to work closely with our CBP and ICE partners to enforce the federal firearms laws in our efforts to combat the smuggling and trafficking of firearms into our country," said John A. Torres, special agent in charge, ATF Los Angeles Field Division.

The so-called "Tommy Gun" was popular with gangsters and law enforcement figures during the 1920s and 1930s. It also played a pivotal role in World War II. Today the weapon is highly prized by gun collectors.

Scharf was arraigned yesterday before U.S. Magistrate Judge Fernando M. Olguin who set bond at \$50,000.

ICE