

Transport Minister Reid in Asthma Gaffe

The ABD has uncovered further evidence that Government policy is driven by Green Hogwash. In a recent DETR press release (Press Notice: 838, 13 October 1998, More Transport Choice for Schools & Hospitals), the following quote was attributed to Transport Minister John Reid: "There is a growing recognition that increasing congestion and air pollution are reducing the benefits of the car and may be contributing to the rise in asthma and other respiratory problems."

ABD Chairman, Brian Gregory, responded, "When drivel like this is put into the mouth of a Government Minister, then we cannot ever expect positive [transport] choices, only punitive taxes and obstruction." The facts about asthma must clearly be repeated:

* Numerous studies have shown conclusively that cars have absolutely no effect on the incidence of asthma or other respiratory ailments.

* According to the Department of Health's Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution, Asthma and outdoor air pollution, "Asthma has increased in the UK over the

past 30 years but this is unlikely to be the result of changes in air pollution."

* Dr L Wallace of the US Environmental Protection Agency found that air pollution inside homes is up to 70 times greater than outdoors.

* Dr Martin Stern of the British Allergy Foundation has categorically rejected that asthma is linked to pollution; instead he links it to the household dust mite and its excreta. Modern living, with central heating, draught-free doubleglazing, carpets and poor diet, provide the ideal environment for the dust mite.

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Prescott puts his foot in Global Warming

Deputy Prime Minister joins sidekick John Reid in spouting nonsense

Just as the ABD was drawing attention to the incorrect statements about air quality and asthma attributed to Transport Minister John Reid, it transpires his boss John Prescott is at it, too. The Independent on 27 October reported, on the subject of Global Warming: "Doing nothing, Mr Prescott said, was not an option. 'The science is clear and the evidence is no longer challenged,' he said. '1998 looks to be the world's warmest year on record, and this year's El Nino was the worst on record.'"

The ABD is puzzled, Mr Prescott has nothing but grief to gain from his support for Global Warming Theory. We can only assume that he is so busy running his huge department that it is easy for the huge raft of evidence against this very convenient (for the environmentalists) theory to be kept from him.

To suggest that Global Warming "science is clear" is absurd, but to go on to say that "no-one challenges the evidence any more" is simply untrue. Here is just a flavour of the groups and arguments ranged against the idea that man's activity is catastrophically warming the planet:

* The European Science And Environment Forum - a group of independent scientists concerned about "premature certainty" on environmental issues described the Greenhouse Effect as "a Political rather than a scientific phenomenon" in their 1996 book, The Global Warming Debate. Mr Prescott is obviously more interested in decree than debate.

* Friis-Christensen and Lassen pointed out in the Journal of Atmospheric & Terrestrial Physics that 83% of global temperature variations since the 1500s can be accounted for by the solar cycle. Obviously not on JP's

bedtime reading list - unsurprisingly!

* But he should have seen the Economist and in the Observer in April 1998, which extensively reported that Dr Friis-Christensen and another Danish scientist called Svensmark proposed a mechanism involving cosmic rays and cloud formation to explain these observations.

* This impressed Dr Kirkby and Dr Close, physicists at Cern in Geneva, enough for them to propose building equipment to test this theory. Obviously, what is clear to John Prescott is rather more challenging to real scientists - a case of a little knowledge being dangerous.

* Physicist Nigel Calder has written a book - The Manic Sun - which challenges the idea that burning fossil fuels warms the planet. But our John doesn't know about that, either.

* Dr Piers Corbyn of Weather Action and the Southbank University wrote a major article in the May edition of Weather Action. This began by questioning the "conventional wisdom" of man made global warming which were "clearly contradicted" by reliable satellite measurements. He said that the fundamental assumptions behind GWT must be challenged. On the front cover is a picture

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OTR changes

Although this issue is slimmer than members have been used to for some time, we now aim to produce On The Road on a monthly basis. It is hoped that this more frequent contact with members will improve the campaigning effectiveness of the ABD.

ABD membership doubles in six months

The campaign against anti-car measures has moved up a gear as Membership of the Association of British Drivers has doubled in six months. More and more people recognise the threats to their freedom and livelihoods posed by the unnecessary, anti-car campaign being waged by influential, well funded, but surprisingly small pressure groups.

ABD Chairman and founder Brian Gregory said: "This is great news for the motorist, and great news for Britain. We have been warning people about the plans of the anti-car lobby for years, and now the chickens are coming home to roost we are seeing lots of new members - people are at last recognising the threat to freedoms they have taken for granted all their lives."

The ABD remains, however, a group run in the spare time of working people and so is a true grass roots organisation. But with more resources and manpower, the ABD can now step up its activities, and is streamlining its campaign around three main thrusts:

1. Transport: Demanding proper roads (and railways) in exchange for paying one eighth of all taxes. The motorist provides one eighth of government income, but is excluded from "integrated transport".

2. Environment: Debunking the nonsense you hear about the environmental impact of the car. Scientifically bankrupt scare stories are used to justify actions against drivers.

3. Safety: Promoting effective road safety instead of the criminalisation of safe driving. Safety policy is being driven by a desire to make driving more miserable, not safer. This is resulting in unnecessary deaths whilst criminalising the driving population.

Prescott's GWT folly

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of Dr Corbyn talking to John Prescott's Cabinet colleague Alistair Darling, who visited the centre in April. John obviously doesn't have time to talk to his colleagues, either!

* John says 'this is the hottest year on record' (even before the year has finished!) - wrong! In mediaeval times, global temperatures were at least a degree Centigrade warmer than now, while GWT theory has been constructed around half a degree warming over this century.

* Even this warming as measured at the surface, often in cities. This is not accurate because cities have got warmer in modern times. They are called 'urban heat islands', and temperature readings are simply not representative. With so much hot air in Westminster, nobody should be surprised by this.

* Computer models used to predict chaos are limited by available computing power at the moment. When the best models are run over even short timescales, starting with data say from 20 or 30 years ago they cannot get today's climate right, and they go wrong when started with today's data and are run backwards. If the assumptions put in are wrong, so will what comes out be wrong.

* British Antarctic Survey data and websites tell the story that the small pieces of ice sheet which are seen by satellite to be breaking away do so for purely local reasons, and this has been happening for a very long time.

* Global warming has happened many times before cars and industry were invented, and to higher degree than now. Climatologists agree that during the period 9,000 BC - 5,000 BC global temperatures were over two degrees warmer than now, while a team led by Prof. Shamesh of the Weizmann Institute, Israel, has shown from lake sediments in Kenya that there was another period of global warming between 350 BC and 450 AD.

* Natural climate variation has gone the other way too, with a mini ice age during the period 1645 - 1715 attributed to a decrease in solar activity observed and recorded by astronomers at the time - during this period the River Thames repeatedly froze over.

* Satellite measurements of the Earth's atmosphere during recent decades have shown no increase in average atmospheric temperature, in fundamental disagreement with GWT thinking

* Carbon Dioxide is touted about as 'the' greenhouse gas yet water vapour has an absolute greenhouse effect over twice as large as CO₂; computer models are largely based on CO₂ warming and this is another inaccuracy inherent in these models.

* Sherwood Idso of the US Water Conservation Laboratory in Arizona has published articles which show how

'alterations' to major climate change publications have appeared mysteriously, comparing pre-publication versions and that which is released (e.g. the first definitive world document on GWT (The Science of Climate Change 1995) he found that somehow over 15 sections had had their wording changed *after* scientists approved the final draft.

* Up to 25% of ice core samples (the main way of measuring historic CO₂ concentrations) are regularly rejected as "unsuitable" because they do not fit the required theory.

* Many of the main proponents of GWT were predicting an ice age with equal fervour just 20 years ago. Many of them have funding packages which depend entirely on accepting GWT as a fundamental assumption behind their work.

Clear science, Mr Prescott? Evidence no longer challenged, Mr Prescott? We think not. The plain fact is that, when natural sources of CO₂ are taken into account, cars generate less than one percent of global CO₂ emissions anyway - moreover domestic heating accounts for more CO₂ than does transport, yet the tax element on domestic fuel is 5% whereas for petrol it is over 400%.

Meanwhile, our truck drivers go out of business because diesel is so much cheaper on the continent, where they are past masters at agreeing to things then doing nothing. The Germans are even getting rid of nuclear power, which can only increase their CO₂ emissions.

If Prescott goes ahead with his more draconian plans to achieve this absurd 20% CO₂ reduction target, the economic hardship he creates will be one helluva way to justify raising indirect taxes from motorists. If we are entering a mini ice age in 30 years - something which seems just as likely as the costa del Blackpool scenario - then John Prescott is likely to be remembered as a figure of loathing and ridicule rather than the courageous pioneer he sees when he looks in the mirror.

Pollution hot line

ABD members should use the DETR Smoky Diesel hot line to report buses and coaches to their local Vehicle Inspectorate RTE division.

The numbers are:

Scotland	0131 244 6521
North West	0161 494 9085
fax	0161 494 0600
North East	0113 288 7818
West Midlands	0121 789 7999
Eastern	0116 276 2411
South Wales	01443 224 771
Western	0117 953 1924
South Eastern	0181 665 0885

Be sure to report the Vehicle Registration, Description, Location, Date and Time.

The Association of British Drivers

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For contact details see:
www.abd.org.uk/contacts.htm

The ABD Needs You!

The ABD is run entirely by volunteers, so the more members who take an active role, the more we will be able to achieve. Contact any of the above members if you can help.



Reducing accidents

Sir - The problem we all face is the increasing accident rate on our roads. So-called environmentalists attribute this, and other troubles, to the mere existence and use of the motor car, with its obviously beneficent potential for fast, individual transport. Your answer is to increase education and try to improve driving skills, in part by punishment for driving errors. Every government worldwide faces the same problem, no one has found an answer.

The word you should be using, but have apparently overlooked, is segregation. Comparatively few pedestrians and cyclists are killed or injured by railway trains. Yet railways are not attacked in the same way as the car, nor subject to similar restrictions. Nobody thinks it necessary to impose speed limits on trains. Nobody demands higher skills in train drivers. On the contrary, it is accepted that for most of its journey a railway train moves faster than is considered safe for a road vehicle; for most of the journey the train driver, whose brakes are a joke compared to those of a car, drives, and is encouraged to drive, at such speeds that he could not stop within the limit of his forward vision. Yet the train is safer than the motor vehicle. This is because the principle of segregation has always been applied to the railways, in sharp contrast to the roads.

The true and proper solutions to the road accident problem have already been found and applied to the railways. What you should be clamouring for is the same application of those same principles, to the design and layout of our roads. The carriageway should be fenced off from pedestrians. Cyclists should be accommodated on cycle tracks. For both pedestrians and cyclists, large numbers of bridges are needed over or under the carriageway. The corresponding acts of trespass should be made an offence.

That is the true way forward. I prophesy that you will try your hardest not to take it. But it remains the only way to avoid accidents.

Walter Elwell, Pulborough, West Sussex
The ABD is its members, the policies of the ABD are a consensus of the views of the members. Members cannot expect their views to be taken into account until they put them forward.

As a matter of fact, increasing traffic levels in the UK were accompanied by a decreasing death toll until the arrival of Gatsos and "speed kills". - Ed.

Write to On The Road!

This is *your* Newsletter! Write to the ABD with your experiences, observations and opinions. Letters or longer articles are welcome. If possible, send electronic as well as typewritten copy.

Radar detectors

Sir - I recently joined the ABD and noted the article in Issue 19 (Summer 1998) regarding radar detectors. I thought my experiences might help prevent other members wasting their money.

Some time ago I purchased the Mirage / Phazer jammer, but subsequent testing proved it simply didn't work. I contacted the UK agents, explained the situation and our findings, and requested a refund. This was given in full. Subsequently, as noted in Auto Express, the Managing Director of the firm was found to be a student using his grant to set up the company. The range of the unit was found to be only 1.3 metres! He was fined for making inaccurate claims regarding the performance of the devices, and also for inciting motorists to break the law!

My second experience arose after purchasing a top of the range, expensive radar detector from a well known supplier in Scotland. The device was very sensitive, and it did very successfully notify me of all sorts of radio transmissions. However, its selectivity was all but useless, and the constant buzzing and flashing of lights every time it detected something (traffic lights, alarms, you name it, it went off!) drove me to distraction so I requested a refund. I was advised that I'd be better off selling it in Loot or a similar sort of magazine, but eventually an offer was made to buy it back, albeit at a much lower than price I'd paid for it. I was told that 'falsings' were a way of life with radar detectors. I responded that if I'd been told this at the time of purchase, and that if this information had been included in their advertising material, I'd not have bought one in the first place.

My third and final experience came with the purchase of the very latest '5 band' unit that was supposed to be the ultimate detector. This time however, it was purchased on the basis that if I wasn't happy after 14 days, I could have a full refund < no questions asked.

A couple of thousand miles later I reached the conclusion, that at present, radar detectors in the UK are a waste of money because they do not identify what the source is that's just activated them. Great sensitivity and quality construction are all very well but at the end of the day, the constant noise and flashing lights tell you nothing about whether or not there is some form of speed trap ahead, or it's simply a set of traffic lights changing or someone's burglar alarm going off. Save your money!

Paul Walker, Cheadle, Cheshire

Road rage

Sir - "Road Rage" by Alasdair Maciver is a brilliant anecdotal analysis of present day ills on the road. I have always tried to make driving a free-flowing process by using the skills of forward anticipation and adjustment of speed to maintain a constant progress, to minimise complete stops and to avoid impeding the progress of other drivers. This effort is regularly frustrated by the actions of the many drivers who seem to have their cars

in gear and their brains in neutral. The following are just a sample of the characters I find on the road every day.

Tommy Tenfeet-Wide. Usually driving a small car he thinks is ten feet wide, and wearing a flat cap. He drives as close as possible to the road's centre line. When he sees you approaching a parked vehicle from the opposite direction, he makes no effort to move to the left so you can flow through < you have to interrupt the flow and stop.

When he's in front of you he stops behind any parked vehicle, out near the white line, because a ten feet wide car cannot get through, so he halts your flow again.

The only time Tommy pulls to the left is when he has to stop and make a right turn. He thinks his car is thirty feet long and needs the space to turn. No room is left for you to flow through on the nearside.

Sam Soldier. Clearly a man of military precision. When he approaches a roundabout he keeps his eyes fixed straight ahead, and does a smart Halt! at the Give-Way line. Only when stationary does he make a smart Eyes Right! to survey an expanse of empty road and to wait for traffic arriving from the next county.

Auntie Flo (anti-flow). When she sees a clear road and a green traffic light, she slows down, and down and down until the lights change so she has to stop. When the lights change again, she looks around to find out how to put the car into gear, and then eventually moves off very slowly, thus ensuring only one or two following vehicles will get through before the lights are red again. But don't worry because you will soon catch her up as she toddles along at a nice steady 'safe' 25mph.

Despite her hesitancy at traffic lights, Auntie Flo makes up for this in other ways. When she gets to a junction to make a left turn, she looks down the major road to her right, and if she can see something approaching at speed, she will happily turn left into the main road and fail to accelerate. She can never understand why she hears squealing brakes, blaring horns and sees lots of light. She is proud to say that in 40 years of driving she has never had an accident, but has seen an awful lot of other people's crashes.

Teddy Tractor-Follower. My home area of North Yorkshire is a very agricultural county, and this character is a student of agricultural machinery. There's nothing he likes better than following a farm tractor for mile after mile on country roads at about 15 mph. If he can collect a line of cars behind him, even better. Then we can all admire this wonderful machine and the way its giant tyres throw clods of mud at the following cars.

There are many more of these characters, all striving to make their contribution to ever more congestion, delay and danger on the roads.

Peter Horton, Ripon, North Yorkshire

The Birmingham “Transport Summit”

Chris Ward reports from the “Transport Summit” organized by Birmingham City Council on Friday 23rd October 1998.

The day consisted of a series of presentations, and two breakout sessions for discussions.

Welcome: Cllr John Chapman, Chairman of Transport & Technical Services Committee said “Charges must enjoy acceptability of the public”. He claimed that the rush hours would spread across the day and merge. “Transport biggest contributor to air pollution,” he said and “Travelling by public transport is much safer than by car.” (I was reminded of that school bus that went under a low bridge recently!) “Road deaths and injuries are not sustainable,” Cllr Chapman maintained, obviously not having a clue what sustainable means.

Introduction to the White Paper: David Ritchie, Government Office, talked of workplace parking pilots. (anyone know where?) Mentioned that the White Paper specifies that any congestion charging must include improvements in public transport. He of course insisted that the White Paper was “not anti-road”.

The thinking behind the White Paper: Professor Phil Goodwin, Chairman of advisors to the White Paper (the Strang Gang) claimed that removing traffic from town centres did not harm trade, and that congestion did not occur because the “total traffic volume is not fixed”. He claimed that new roads only temporarily relieved congestion. He referred to reallocating road space to the “most needy” and “most important”, but of course declined to say who he meant. He said it was necessary to reduce capacity in terms of number of vehicles, and that “some courage was necessary”. He stated that many cities were very cautious about introducing charges, but that the government could not allow “unrestricted growth in car use”.

Market Research: Dr Laurie Pickup, Transport & Travel Research This was a summary of market research carried out for the city council and contained some useful information for us. 800-900 replies were received (about a 30% response).

55% of Birmingham households have a car. There was a “hard core” of people who only use a car. Road pricing was regarded as “not a reasonable response”. “Controlling use of the private car is one of the least popular suggestions.” Few people are willing to change their behaviour. Park & Ride was regarded as a low priority. Lorries were not seen as a priority problem, and concept of freight lanes was greeted with suspicion. Cycling was seen as a minority issue. There was limited support for traffic reduction, it

was seen as “impractical” and “harmful”. Road pricing received minority support, others preferred increase in council tax. Cars per household: 0=28.9% 1=45.8% 2=21% 3=3.6% 4=0.7% 5=0.1% (This seems to contradict the 55% given above.)

Out of the 800 - 900 respondents, those in favour of various proposals were as follows:

- Maintain roads and car parks - 320
- Extend Park & Ride - 70
- Improve public transport - 550
- Encourage walking and cycling - 150
- Provide disabled transport - 260
- Improve lorry routes - 250
- Change the way we travel - 110

The above are approximate figures taken from a graph. Those in favour of various funding options were:

- Charging for roads - 30%
- Increase parking fees - 45%
- Charge for work parking - 70% (He did not state what percentage had a work parking place!)
- Increase rates - 12%
- Decrease other expenditure - 54%

TRR divided the respondents into ‘clusters’ 36% were classed as pro-car [Seems too low on the basis of the above. - Ed] More like 30% were generally pro-public transport the other clusters (no percentages given) were - low income groups, housewives, ethnic minorities, mixed travel mode, full time women workers

[Copies of the city council’s version of this market research are available from Chris Ward. - Ed]

RAC urge: Experiment with urban road pricing

The Motorist’s Perspective: Nigel Davies, RAC, Well, if this was the motorist’s perspective, I’m a dutchman. A poor presentation, little more than reading notes. The speaker displayed virtually no enthusiasm. I considered it possible that the guy didn’t agree with what he was saying, but had been told to say it anyway. Either way he was useless.

The good/reasonable points he made were:

- Transport state is due to failure of government.
- He referred to the ‘greening of government’ but did not comment on whether this was good or bad!
- “in most cases the car is the rational choice”
- Re-introduce motorail services.
- 33% of congestion caused by roadworks.
- Cars and roads must be part of integrated transport.
- Charge contractors a rent whilst working on a road to minimize construction time.

But he also said this :

- The general perception is that road building is no longer sustainable. He did not challenge that view.

- He suggested identifying the 20% of car journeys which are not essential and targeting them. Perhaps we should tell RAC members to ring the RAC every time they set out and ask if the RAC consider the journey essential!
- He discussed “the RACs priority for cycling” (‘Royal Association of Cyclists’ perhaps?)
- Bus lanes should be enforced using bus mounted cameras.
- Experiment with urban road pricing.
- He referred to “appropriate speed limits” without saying what he meant.
- Maximize enforcement of speed by automatic means.

The chairman of the meeting said that the RAC presentation “shows how far the debate has gone”.

Sloman: reducing car use has “benefits in terms of freedom”

The Environmental Perspective: Lynn Sloman, Transport 2000. By far the most fanatically anti-car speaker of the day, she bizarrely stated that reducing car use had “benefits in terms of freedom”! Little factual information was given, just propaganda waffle and pretty pictures of streets with trees in. She mentioned that Edinburgh has set a 30% traffic reduction target. She called for blanket 20mph urban limits. She said that the best means of stopping people using cars was to “take away the parking space at the end of the journey”. She also said that the first UK home zone trials are to begin next year.

Visions Strategy: ‘Visions’ is Birmingham City Council’s name for its anti-car policy which it constantly states it doesn’t have. David Pywell, Director of Transportation Department (who had made several facial expressions during the T2000 presentation which indicated that he did not agree with everything which was said) mentioned several road improvement schemes underway, but also said Birmingham supported 20mph zones. He wanted to know if ‘Visions’ went far enough. He asked whether Birmingham have a traffic reduction target. He claimed that the audience were a representative sample of the people of Birmingham but did not go into how they had been chosen.

Breakout group, School run / commuting: We first discussed the school run, and I was pleased that much of the discussion centred around how to encourage children to walk/cycle, rather than how to stop parents driving their cars. Even those representatives of local resident groups who were there to complain about cars parking outside their houses were not anti-car nutters; rather they wanted to know what the city council were going to do to provide proper parking for parents! Though one 50-something councillor did give his

opinion that the problem was caused by women owing cars, which they never did in his day!

Even when we got to commuting, the discussion centred more on how to improve public transport than on preventing people travelling by car. The city council person who was chairing the group asked those who commuted by car how they might be persuaded to use public transport, he did not ask others how they might be forced to do so.

It seemed to me that even members of the public who are not specifically pro-car are not necessarily anti-car, but they can easily be made so by the Lynn Slomans of this world - we need to get to them first.

Lord Whitty Spoke of 'discouraging car use unless it is essential' but did not say who was going to decide what constituted 'essential'. He surprised everyone by accepting questions from the floor, but his typical politician waffle answers meant he only had time for three, of which the best for us was a chap from West Midlands Fire Service who said they wanted the 'carrot' before the 'stick'.

A number of local companies and organisations then made presentations:

Travel West Midlands (a bus company): David Leeder, TWM, gave what was (regrettably) the best presentation of the day. A very slick computer based slideshow, which had obviously been well rehearsed, and was given in a very professional way. It started off as simply a pro-bus show, but rapidly deteriorated into a car bashing session, with calls for 'sticks' and parking taxes. He claimed 88.3% of journeys in the West Midlands are made by car. He called for re-allocation of road space to "environmentally sensitive modes". And made the gross statement - "car drivers pay nothing for what they inflict on the environment". Spoke of marketing buses to 'Mondeo Man' with an accompanying picture of Jeremy Clarkson, to guffaws from some of the audience. He gave away the real reason behind bus lanes when he talked about making buses faster than BMWs. Despite this he went on to claim TWM wanted a "level playing field with the car", and were "not asking for special favours"!

Chamber of Commerce: Tony Bradley, Birmingham Chamber of Commerce gave a very effective, and the most anti-green presentation of the summit. Roads are the most flexible form of transport for business, but not predictable. Any loss of flexibility would not work. Cars and lorries have a very significant role to play. Businesses will relocate if green taxes force them out of cities. He said that the option of building no more roads is not an option. Unfortunately, he said that any congestion charging must be national and he seemed happy for the private motorist to be targeted

Rover Group: Roger Twiney, Director of Environmental Programmes, Rover Group Again his presentation contained too much apologizing to greens. He called for choice.

Said roads need improving. Referred to the "Devil in the detail" of the white paper. Questioned whether public transport is always greener, but gave no figures to support it! He showed predicted traffic by 2020 to be between 28.1 & 35.2 million. He talked about road humps and pollution, and although I knew what he meant, it was badly put across and I'm sure most of the audience didn't understand! He mentioned that modern cars are twenty times cleaner than in 1970s.

Closing comments: The Chairman wished everyone a safe journey, "even those who've come by car". Nothing like an independent chairman eh?

Reid's asthma gaffe

... continued from front page

* A report by the National Asthma Council draws exactly the same conclusion.
* The heavily polluted eastern European countries have very low incidences of asthma. Conversely, New Zealand, which is noted for its clean air, has amongst the highest incidence in the world per head of population.

Add to this the figures supplied by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution which show that car exhaust pollution will fall by between 60 and 80% by 2010 - falls that are already well underway as cars get cleaner - and the air quality monitoring published daily showing that levels of all the main pollutants are well within WHO guidelines already, and the picture is almost complete.

Congestion - well, there is something that does exist. It exists because of decades of underinvestment in our transport infrastructure, both road and rail, and a lamentable failure to consider where inhabitants of new out of town housing developments are going to work.

The bottom line - the 'growing recognition' of these largely imaginary problems mentioned by Dr Reid in his press release is no more than the wishful thinking of certain environmental groups looking for an excuse to pursue their anti car agendas. It is completely unacceptable for such inaccurate statements to appear in government releases.

Poet's corner

The BBC and Integrity

by Lance K Green

We used to see, and all agree, we could rely on BBC.

It came, of course, like cart and horse. 'Twas bundled with integrity.

So propaganda would be banned a war was fought across the World.

That noble flags - not silent gags - could ever be proudly unfurled.

But now the Beeb, its morals sleep, it's decided it's anti-car.

New info comes, so do its sums? It sure prefers by far the bar.

The facts say no, don't care or know. Opinions are now ready made.

Its mind's made up. Of truth don't sup. For all is done and all is said.

Haughty Aunty, nose in pantry! She cares more for the food than wine.

Reporters sneer. Bring up the rear! For they care not; with greens they dine.

But we take guard! The game is hard! We'll fight against its evil din!

Now hear the call! We'll give it all! And when we fight, we fight to win!

LKG for Poet Laureate! - Ed.

Web sites

New readers of OTR could be forgiven for thinking that global warming is given undue attention in a drivers' association news letter. But make no mistake, it is one of the biggest sticks wielded by the anti-car brigade to intimidate the ignorant into accepting their politically motivated plans. So every opportunity to challenge GWT must be taken.

Two excellent web sites to inform yourself of the truth are the Junk Science website at

<http://www.junkscience.com>

and the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, at

<http://www.co2science.org>

Speed Limits - how they are set and your Right to Object



Action Pack

A 12-page document with all you need to know to oppose the setting of unnecessarily low limits by local authorities:

- an explanation of the procedures
- action checklists to help you prepare
- details from relevant DoT documents
- a sample letter of objection.

This action pack has been prepared by Malcolm Heymer, ABD member and transport planner. To receive a copy send a large, stamped (26p), self-addressed envelope to The Editor, PO Box 3151, Colchester CO6 3JH. Non-members should also send a donation of at least £1 (cheques payable to Pro-Motor Ltd).

The ABD in the media

This item was scheduled for the Autumn edition but was held over due to lack of space.

The ABD has continued to feature regularly in magazines and newspapers as well as radio broadcasts.

Autocar quoted the ABD on the 20th May in their news section under the heading "Trial Scheme Boosts Speed Camera Tally". The article was one of the earliest press reports about the controversial Lancashire scheme which will see a thirty-fold increase in the number of camera sites in that County from next year, code-named Operation Victoria by police. The ABD criticised the scheme as an example of abuse of speed camera technology. A week earlier, in the 13th May edition of **Autocar** we said that the planned increase in speed camera numbers would lead to Police officers losing the trust of British motorists. **Autocar** featured us again on the 2nd September, when we criticised the Highways Agency for their plan to put a bus lane on the M4 Motorway into London, combined with a 50 mph speed limit enforced by cameras, and a reduction in the limit on the elevated section down to a snail-like 40 mph. The bus lane, which is bound to make congestion worse on one of our busiest motorways, will be in the outside lane, involving bus drivers in a dangerous manoeuvre across two lanes of traffic to reach it

Roads and traffic spokesman, Mark MacArthur-Christie had a letter published in **The Times** newspaper on the 23rd July 1998, in which the ABD was quoted, as well as five letters in the Oxford Times in which he has consistently opposed the anti-car Oxford Transport Strategy.

On the 24th of July, Chairman Brian Gregory was featured in an article in **Fleet News** in which he brought home the message that lower speeds cost time. A similar story also appeared in the **Yorkshire Post**. Brian repeated his success with **Fleet News** on the 11th September, when **Fleet News** devoted nearly half a page to another story: "Kill Your Speed? Time for a Rethink?"

The Daily Telegraph has published several letters over the past few months: "A Question of Speed" on the 9th May, and on the 3rd September a letter by Mark MacArthur-Christie on Digital Speed Cameras. The ABD was quoted both times. In the **Daily Telegraph's** "Honest John" column concerning the controversial Suffolk speed limit initiative - which has led to more and lower limits extending into rural areas, but at the price of *higher* casualties - that paper quoted Chairman Brian Gregory on the 6th September, saying that the authorities were breaking the assurances given at the time cameras were introduced that they were only going to be used at accident blackspots.

On the 17th July **The Northern Echo**

quoted the ABD, and Robert Croucher wrote an editorial in the August edition of **Classic Car Magazine** in which he quoted the Association of British Drivers.

Leading ABD member, Nigel Humpaway got extensive coverage on the myth of car pollution in the Worcester Evening News on the 24th August. Steve Dommett, On The Road editor had a letter published in **First Voice Magazine**, published by the Federation of Small Business in its August edition.

Top Gear's leading Motoring Correspondent, Jeremy Clarkson, quoted the ABD in **The Sun** newspaper on the 28th August, and gave our phone number - leading to another flood of enquires.

The European newspaper quoted the ABD on the 31st August, publishing a letter by Mark MacArthur-Christie, and New Civil Engineer published a letter by Malcolm Heymer, quoting the ABD.

Both **What Car** and **Top Gear** magazine covered details from our press release on the Integrated Transport White Paper in their September issues. **T3 Magazine**, which specialises in motor scooters quoted us on the subject of Radar Detectors in their September issue. **AutoExpress** has also recently quoted us.

We are informed that Brian is to have another letter published in the "**Driving**" magazine (mainly for Driving Schools) in their next issue.

On TV and Radio too

Bernard Abrams appeared on **Central TV's** Central News programme on the 5th June about the environmentally unfriendly nature of Park and Ride.

Julian Rowden spoke on behalf of the ABD on **Talk Radio** on the 12th June on the cars and pollution topic. Julian robustly defended the car against the so-called environmentalists, and was met with much support from callers. Julian also spoke on **BBC Radio Nottingham** recently.

Mark MacArthur-Christie spoke on **Thames Valley FM** on the 11th September.

ABD - Drive for Membership

The Government is taking decisions which affect you as a motorist. Your liberty and your wallet are under threat!

It is vital that we organise now! If we delay, it will be too late.

So encourage your friends and colleagues to join the ABD and help in the campaign to protect our freedom.

You will find a membership application form with this issue. Telephone for more copies if you need them.

FACTS

The ABD is represented on the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety.

Members Hugh Bladon and Paul Hemingway are our representatives, and attend meetings on our behalf. These meetings are attended by Government Ministers, where they have the opportunity to seek to influence the debate on key issues such as speed limits and penalties.

Our past contributions have been acknowledged by PACTS and we are particularly pleased to work with the British Motorcyclists Federation.

Mencap drive

On 16-17 April 1999, ABD member Robert Kletz will be taking part in a 24-hour endurance drive, organised by the High Performance Club, in aid of the Royal Society for Mentally Handicapped Children and Adults (MENCAP).

Up to 30 teams of drivers will depart from Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground in Leicestershire at 11:00 on the Friday morning. They will drive around northern England, Wales and Scotland, visiting various circuits en route, before finishing at the Motor Industry Research Association (MIRA) at 11:00 on the Saturday morning. The circuits being visited en route are Anglesey, Knockhill (north of the Forth of Forth) and either Cadwell Park in Lincolnshire or Donington Park in Leicestershire.

HPC's target for this event is £60,000. All the monies raised will go to MENCAP, with no deductions for expenses. Each team member has an individual target of £1000.

Robert is seeking sponsorship and anyone interested should contact him for further details: Home phone, 01925 764752 or daytime phone 01925 254331.

Urgent: Address Update

A member recently lost valuable original documents by posting them to an out-of-date address. The contact details of the ABD and its committee members necessarily change from time to time. Make sure you use the latest information when contacting the ABD by referring to page 2 of OTR.

The Last Laugh

Family Crisis

Jack went into the living room to give his wife the news.

"The priest who married us," said Jack, "wasn't a priest after all."

"Good heavens," said his wife, "what does that mean?"

"Well, it means that we have never been married. All this time we have been living in sin."

"Gosh, what on earth are we going to tell Tom, our son?"

"Oh, don't worry about Tom," said Jack, "he's decided to be a traffic warden anyway."