



Published by

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

2121 Broadway, Room 204, New York, NY 10023.

(212) 866-7489

October/November 1986

THE STATE OF CYCLING 1986:

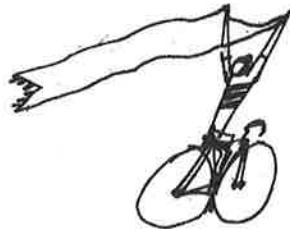
CRACKDOWN OR TURNAROUND?

Summer 1986 was the time New York City's powers-that-be declared war on bicycling. Turning their backs on the explosive growth in auto traffic and the universally troubled subway system, the media and City Hall went after cyclists, first with words, later with muscle.

The word assault was launched by The New York Times -- with no less than 3 editorials demanding police pursuit of "reckless bikers." Gone was the comradely tone of a 1984 Times editorial, celebrating cycling for "no waiting" and its "sense of control," and as a worthy urban adventure: "As a canoeist reads the rapids for sunken logs," The Times wrote then, "a cyclist must read the way ahead for broken pavement, glass and opening doors."

Goodbye, 1984. These days, The Times tells us, "cyclists swerving among moving cars seem to appear from nowhere. They run

SPREAD
THE
WORD!



red lights and speed the wrong way on one-way streets, menacing pedestrians stepping off curbs or leaning out to hail cabs." The Times gasped, "the proliferation of cycling commuters and messengers adds a lethal volatility to the urban scene."

Tough talk. And so, after initial hesitation, the NY Police Department swung into action. Since late July, police have been ticketing cyclists at a dozen points in Manhattan, from the World Trade center to Central Park, at the rate of several hundred a day. Some tickets, to wrong-way cyclists or red-light speedsters, could be justifiable if the law also protected cyclists from reckless drivers (and careless pedestrians). As it is, singling out bikers for punish-

ment, particularly messengers, is scape-goating pure and simple. Errant cyclists are fined \$50 a clip while speeding autos go scot-free. Applied to the out-of-control state of NY's streets, the old adage, "When bad news comes, shoot the messenger," is painfully in evidence.

What happened to turn the cycling climate from heady support to heavy crackdown in just two years?

We suspect that with more cars, trucks and limos, the streets got even more crowded and cycling got tougher. Messengers especially had to ride harder-nosed to survive 8 hours of biking day in and day out. This led to more bike-pedestrian collisions and near-collisions, which invariably registered as the cyclist's fault regardless of who held the right of way. Possibly some of the more affluent and influential cyclists -- perhaps The Times' biking editorialist -- grew tired of dodging cabs and started hailing them.

And so, people in power grew more remote from the reality that city cyclists must contend with. Media attacks became more natural, and reckless-biker horror stories met with approval. A new enemy was born. Depressing? Yes. Hopeless? No. Here's why.

First, more people are cycling in New York City than ever before. There are more bike commuters, more messengers, more people getting around by bike. Indeed, in some ways the uproar over bikers is a natural result of our greater numbers. Statistics from City Hall indicate there's now one

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6.)

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

GENERAL MEETING

Monday, October 20, 7 PM.
TA office: 2121 Broadway, Rm 204
(at 74th Street)
Discussion: Crackdown
Safety Code

A BIKE MESSENGER'S POINT OF VIEW

The following is excerpted from an article submitted to the New York Times OP/Ed page. Its author, Bob McGlynn, has been kind enough to let us quote from it. Bob's article was not accepted by the Times.

"I have been a bicycle messenger for 10 years and am a founding member of the Independent Couriers Association. Currently I am on leave of absence due to injuries sustained on the job....

The recent crackdown against bicycle messengers is all out of proportion to our danger and borders on hysteria. Traffic in Midtown - pedestrian and otherwise - is dangerous period; no one can claim to be angelic.... Bike messengers are unfairly targeted. Our adversaries cite a supposed sensational increase in pedestrian/bike accidents (707 in 1985 up from 460 in 1981). There are more for a simple reason: more people are riding bikes - there would certainly be an analogous increase in pedestrian/vehicle accidents if there were more cars on the street. Never mentioned is whose fault those accidents were. Any biker who's worked for even 15 minutes can tell you pedestrian horror stories: people jay walking, walking against the lights, entering the middle of the street from between two parked trucks where we can't see them, or leaving cabs on the street side, etc., etc. It is no wonder why some people will get hit. Luckily most of the time we can professionally and skillfully avoid spaced pedestrians.

Nobody talks much though about messengers getting hurt and killed, as cars stop short in front of us (crash, we hurl into its rear window cracking teeth, fracturing a wrist) or vehicles cut us off squeezing us into the curb (crunch, an ankle is sprained, flesh scraped off as we raze across the sidewalk, fallen from our bikes) or any of the innumerable violent scenarios caused by the pedestrian recklessness noted above. It may not be an exaggeration to say that those of us who've been on the road a significant amount of time (a month?) have a near 100% injury rate - and many companies provide no workers compensation!

Bicycle couriers are being discriminated against and used as scapegoats. There's no comparable crackdown on the just as, and more, "guilty" pedestrian and motor traffic. Messengers though are young, Black, Hispanic, and often long haired Whites - therefore targets and a relatively defenseless group. In an increasingly gentrified city - part of which means "cleaning up" the working class of the street by regulating and harassing messengers, peddlers, cabbies and horse and buggy drivers - who'll stick up for us?

(CONTINUED NEXT COLUMN)

The Political Economy of Bicycle Messengering

The reason we ride fast and often reckless is because that's the name of the game - we are piece rate and commission workers - if we don't kill ourselves working hard we'll make no money. Sounds all American huh - dog eat dog and all that. The messenger business is the purest Capitalism, and it's almost the only place where unemployed youth can find a job and make a buck. (It's also mythology that we're all raking in a lot of cash. Most only make a living, or barely at that. We have no sick days, holiday pay, unemployment insurance or anything else.) But we never voted for the system. I for one would opt for a steady decent wage and more a relaxed pace where profit making wasn't the end all - which if I'd had that all along, may have prevented the cuts and bruises, concussion, displaced vertebrae, and permanent lower back problem I've incurred being a "killer messenger".

Possible Solutions

Why not encourage bike riding as a way to alleviate over crowded Midtown, and lessen bulky and infinitely more dangerous (and polluting!) motor traffic. There are all sorts of ways to make the atmosphere more conducive to bike riding. Decent mass transit would take some motor traffic off the streets and thereby make the streets less scary for bikers. An enclosed lane on the planned new West Side Highway should be encouraged and large buildings would do well to install bike racks. In many countries bicycling is a transportation norm. It is a sane, space saving, efficient, healthy and environmentally safe alternative to fume and traffic choked "modern" urbanism."

Robert McGlynn
Brooklyn, NY

*** NEW TA PHONE NUMBER * 212 866-7489 ***

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

PRESIDENT: Charles Komanoff

EXECUTIVE DIR: Gail Boorstein

Transportation is a non profit bicycle organization dedicated to improving cycling in the New York City area through civic activity.

CITY CYCLIST

EDITOR: Jennifer Sonsini

ASSISTANT EDITOR: Louis Avitabile

The City Cyclist is published six times a year. All articles, photographs, letters and artwork are welcome and appreciated.

THE WEST SIDE HIGHWAY REPLACEMENT: WE KNOW WHAT WE WANT -- A CONTINUOUS BIKEWAY, LET'S GET IT!

So you thought Westway was stopped? Well our Governor and Mayor, strong proponents of the original plan, have set up a joint task force to oversee plans for a more modest highway. One difference -- this time the public review of the transportation plans has been separated from associated real estate schemes.

Mass Transit advocates are suspicious for two reasons. We suspect a Trojan Horse for another ambitious construction scheme; and any money that goes into the highway doesn't go to a mass transit trade-in.

This presents a possible dilemma for Transportation Alternatives. We support mass transportation, both for itself and because improved mass transit is essential to improving traffic conditions. On the other hand each of the four proposals presented by the design team includes some degree of a bicycle-pedestrian path and waterfront access.

Along with other pro-transit groups, TA is examining the plans. They can briefly be described as follows: I. Rebuild the two lane West Side Highway with little design change for \$145 M. II. Rebuild the road with three lanes, wider medians, safer pedestrian crossings and trees for \$165 M. III. Design a new road with three lanes in each direction at a cost of \$200 M. IV. New six lane road with more auto exits and entrances, submerged express lanes, some traffic overpasses (and thus less landscaping than III). This version has a cost of \$450-\$585 M and a ten year completion time. Versions I-III would take five years to complete.

WE MUST PUSH FOR A TRULY CONTINUOUS BIKEWAY AND THE CHEAPEST, LEAST INTENSIVE ROADWAY.

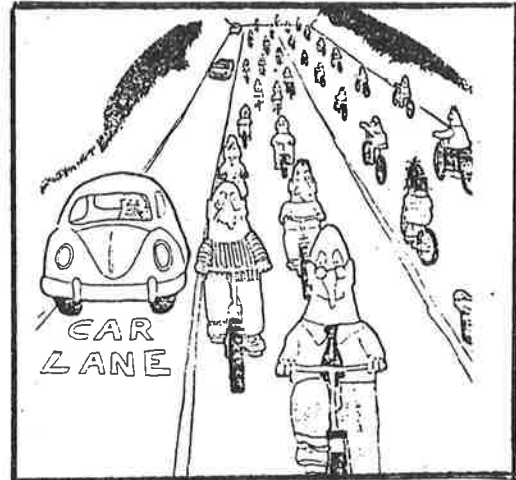
Only by careful reading does it become clear that the bikelane, to the extent that it exists in any of the versions, is useless. In the section from Battery Place to Chambers Street the plans indicate that they include (100% continuous) bikepath. This assumes, in all its versions, that the bikepath will be on an esplanade. This esplanade is not part of the highway plans.

Any cyclist familiar with the section of esplanade that does exist, at Battery Park City, knows that because of inevitable conflict with pedestrians a bikepath there would be useless for transportation or for any kind of serious cycling. It would at best allow for meandering at 5 mph.

Bikepath and walkway plans for the highway north of Manhattan Community College (Chambers Street) are even more outrageous. Depending on which version you look at, the bikelane has 4 to 7 interruptions. What is an interrupted bikelane? It means the bicyclist is supposed to cross and recross the highway, at signals that will be provided. Alternatively the cyclist will be directly in the highway lane, or swim.

On August 6, Vollmer Associates, presented four plans for the Highway Replacement* at a Public Information Hearing. Helga Buseman, Louis Avitabile, Alan Ginsberg, Josh Gosciak and Jennifer Sonsini attended.

It was abundantly clear to us, as it must have been to the City, State and design representatives on the platform, that what the people want is very simple. And that these needs haven't changed from those expressed during the long 10-year Westway struggle. Plainly the public still wants a safe, but minimal highway, with bikepaths, walkways and parks the entire length of the shoreline.



The cost should be under the \$145M earmarked for the first plan, with remaining Westway trade-in money going to improve mass transit. Most statements from the audience were in this vein. Alan Ginsberg, identifying himself as a TA member, stressed the need for a total bike path and pointed out the folly of the several interruptions.*

The Mayor's and Governor's West Side Highway Task Force had its first Public Information Meeting on September 17. Chairman Arthur Levitt, Jr. listened to Jennifer Sonsini's request that the Task Force press for a bikepath the entire length of the new highway. He responded that bicylists are indeed a part of the city, and that their needs would be considered. Alan and Lou were also present at this meeting.

On October 8, at 7:30 am there will be a second Task Force Meeting at the Vista Hotel on West Street. Members planning to attend should contact Alan Ginsberg (718) 924-1627 in order to coordinate. And on October 18, (Saturday), the Task Force is having a Workshop, members should call Alan about this.

Alexia Ialli, the Task Force Community Outreach Coordinator (212)448-2228, will answer questions and add you to the mailing list. Address letters to: Arthur Levitt, Jr., Chairman, West Side Highway Task Force, 2 World Trade Center, Rm.6325, NY, NY 10047.

*Vollmer's 4 plans, with bikepath interruptions, are outlined in the left hand column.

R I D E S

R I D E S

Most of the rides listed here are courtesy of Appalachian Mountain Club bike committee. Please remember that what the leader says goes! Be on time, don't forget your patch kit and/or spare tube. And have fun!

SAT OCT 5. BIKE PIERMONT PIER. 50 mi. Brisk pace, some hills. Steady rain cancels. Bring lunch. Meet 9:45 AM at E. 16 & Park Ave. S. in front of coffee shop. Charles Morris 212 477-3281

SUN OCT 5. POT LUCK PEDAL. 40 mi. Meet 9:30 at Col. Circle. We'll bike up the Hudson, up some hills, for a gourmet picnic at Dobbs Ferry Park. Bring a dish to pass (gourmet, of course) enough for 4, utensils, plate, sit-upon, spare tire & patch kit. Possible stops at Hudson River Museum & Wave Hill (\$2). Rain cancels. Carole Johnson 212 924-8851

SUN OCT 5. HUNTERDON & BUCKS CO. BIKE RIDE. 40 mi. Meet 10 AM Circle Diner, Rte. 202 N. Flemington NJ. Cycle Sergeantsville to New Hope, with stops at gen'l store & last covered bridge. Picturesque farms en route. Call leader for 2nd meeting place & shorter route. Anne Christian 201 762-4711

AMERICAN YOUTH HOSTELS BIKE RIDE OCTOBER 17-19 A DELAWARE CROSSING

The Tyler State Park Hostel in Newtown, PA puts us a short distance from Washington Crossing State Park, as well as the Theodore Roosevelt State Historical Park. This fall foliage trip is just right for some cool weather biking. Cost: \$65 Trip B-2-87 Call 431-7100 for info.

SAT OCT 18. BIKE CENTRAL PARK AND PROSPECT PARK. 25 mi. Ride two auto-free loops with a scenic connecting jaunt over the Brooklyn Bridge. Meet at 10:30 AM at Columbus Circle. Carmen Pujols 212 928-4187.

AMERICAN YOUTH HOSTELS BIKE RIDE SUNDAY OCTOBER 19 A RIDE WITH CULTURE

Broaden your horizons! Become a wordly and cultured individual! Bike with us to the splendiferous Pepsico Sculpture Garden in Purchase, NY. We'll ride through urban and suburban roads of varied terrain and arrive at the gardens for lunch. Bring lock, chain and lunch. Time: 9:00 AM Mileage: 45 Meet at: Pelham Pkwy & White Plains Rd. IRT #2 train. Call 431-7100 for info

SUN OCT 19. BIKE TO FERRY LANDING IN PIERMONT. 35 mi. Picnic at the old ferry landing. Ride thru rolling hills of Rockland Co. Bring or buy lunch. Meet 9:30 AM, NJ side of GWB. Alice Pueschner 201 567-7245.

FRI OCT 24. ANNUAL AMC BICYCLE COMMITTEE SQUARE DANCE. Swing your partner, dosie-do! Live caller will instruct beginners in Western, Square and Ethnic Folk Dances. Helmets not required, but wear your boots and fancy shirts. At the Friends' Hall, 15 Rutherford Pl. 7-11 PM. Entrance on 15th St. between 2nd and 3rd Aves. \$6 includes refreshments. Thanks to the Society of Friends and to Charles Morris.

SAT OCT 25. BREEZY BRONX BIKE RIDE. 16 mi. Enjoy the trees and waterways in our city's most northerly Boro. Pedal quiet streets and bikepaths alongside Pelham Pkwy. to Orchard Beach where we'll admire the view of islands & bridges & have lunch (please bring). Take IRT #2 train to Pelham Pkwy. Sta. & meet at 10:30 AM or #6 to Pelham Bay Park (last stop), cross footbridge & meet at the foot of the ramp at 11 AM. Street pkg. available. Jennifer Sonsini 212 654-0388

SUN OCT 26. BIKE PORT WASHINGTON. 60 mi. Bring lunch. Steady rain cancels. Meet 9:45 AM at corner of E. 16 & Park Ave. S. Charles Morris 212 477-3281

SUN OCT 26. CYCLE LINCROFT TO HOLMDEL. 25 mi. Meet at Lincroft Elem. School, 10 AM (Exit 109, Red Bank, Lincroft from Garden St. Pkwy). Scenic ride through horse ranches and breeding farms in Applejack country. Anne Christian 201 762-4711

SUN OCT 26. JOCKEY HALLOWEEN JAMBOREE BIKE RIDE. Enjoy your choice of a very popular 25, 35 or 45 mi. ride thru the beautiful, but rather hilly autumn countryside of northern NJ. Helmets highly suggested. Bring lunch. NYC flatlanders are forewarned: Morris County hills bear no resemblance to the trivial inclines in Central Park. Call if question. Meet 9 AM at Jockey Hollow Vis. Center, off I-287 (NJ). Exit for Bernardsville and get onto Rt 202 north. Left on Tempe Wick Rd. (light) to park entrance. Tour leader: Art Portmore 201 361-5768. Note: phone no. may have changed. Call 212 684-3683 for current whereabouts.

SAT NOV 1. QUEENS PARKS BIKE RIDE. 20 mi. Enjoy an almost flat ride thru the parks and quiet streets of Queens: Flushing Meadow, Botanical Gdns. & Kissena Pk. On our return

(RIDES CONTINUED)

we'll stop to buy plants if the group wishes. Meet 11 AM in 111th St. parking lot nr. the Science Ctr. (Look for the rockets!) Take #7 train to 111th St. & exit right onto 111th. Pedal forward a few blocks to pkg. lot. Jennifer Sonsini 212 654-0388

SUN NOV 2. RIDE WITH THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN. 75 mi. Meet 9 AM at Maxwell's Plum (E 64 & 1st Ave) for a fast ride thru Wash. Irving country. Bring lunch or but in Ossining. Mostly rustic & scenic, buy it seems all uphill so 10 or more speeds & some low gears are strongly recommended. You'll be in shape after this one. 30% chance of rain cancels. Irv Schachter 212 758-5738

SUN NOV 2. BIKE STATEN ISLAND. 45 mi. Brisk pace, some hills. Bring lunch, steady rain cancels. Meet 9:45 AM at corner of E. 16 & Park Ave. S. Charles Morris 212 477-3281

SAT NOV 8. BIKE TO ROCKLAND LAKE PARK. 55 mi. Across the GWB, meander thru Bergen & Rockland counties, picnic at lake with its scenic surrounding loop and work out on 9W on return trip. Bring or buy lunch. Bring patch kit. Meet 9:30 AM, GWB, Ft. Wash Ave., or 10 AM NJ side of Bridge. Gary Meyer 212 928-4187

SAT NOV 8. CYCLE FLEMINGTON TO NESHANIC. Meet 10 AM Circle Diner, Rte 202, Flemington, NJ. Follow old stagecoach road past many farms over rolling hills of Hunterdon Co. A stop at Neshanic flea market. Ann Christian 201 762-4711

SUN NOV 9. BIKE STATEN ISLAND. 25 mi. Leisurely explore the island, including the Tibetan Temple & Museum which houses the largest collection of Tibetan art outside Tibet. Meet at So. Ferry for 10:30 boat (Vehicle Entrance, buy 25 cent bike ticket beforehand). Bring or buy lunch. Bring lock, helmet, spare tube or patch kit. Bad weather cancels. Jacque Swartz 212 757-7843

SUN NOV 9. BIKE FROM THE PLUM TO ALLISON PARK. 25 mi. Meet 10:30 AM at Maxwell's Plum (E. 64 & 1st Ave.) to cycle Central Pk., Riverside Dr. and GWB to picnic spot with lovely Hudson views. Level terrain & mod. pace. Bring lunch. 30% chance rain cancels. Hindy & Armanda Schachter 212 758-5738

SUN NOV 9. FRENCHTOWN PEDAL SPECIAL. Meet 10 AM Frenchtown, NJ by Delaware Bridge. 25 mi. rural route through Quakerstown, Cherryville, Everitstown. Some hills. Bring lunch. Anne Christian 201 762-4711

SAT NOV 15. BIKE THE VILLAGE TO THE VERRAZANO. 30 mi. Meet 10 AM Wash Sq. Pk. Arch; ride to the Bridge thru Prospect Pk. & Brooklyn back sts. Return on Pkwy. bike path. Sandy Lewis 212 228-6309

SUN NOV 16. BIKE TO NYACK. 50 mi. Brisk ride for all you "Killer Bikers" out there. Over the GWB & up the Hudson. Bring or buy lunch. Meet 10 AM Maxwell's Plum (E. 64 & 1st Ave.) 30% chance of rain cancels. Irving Schachter 212 758-5738

FRI NOV 21. BICYCLE WORKSHOP. Introduction to the bicycle as a machine. Description of parts, subsystems. Demonstration of tools of the trade. Basic trouble-shooting, maintenance, 5-min. pre-ride checkout, lubrication (bring your own). Flats and sharps. 10-speed oriented. \$5 fee includes AMC Bike Booklet covering mechanics, techniques and fitness aspects. Ride up, indoor bike parking available. limited to 15. Reg. in advance w/instructor: Gary Meyer 212 928-4187 nites, leave msg. 6:30 PM, 920 Riverside Dr., #7. Between 162 & 163 Sts. Easily accessible via A and #1 trains also.

SUN NOV 23. EAST RIVER BIKE TOUR. 20-25 mi. We'll cover the waterfront on both sides of the river in Manhattan, Queens & Bklyn., enjoying superb views, diverse neighborhoods & ethnic eats. Rain cancels. Meet 10 AM sharp, City Hall in Manhattan. Dave Lutz 718 624-0346

SUN NOV 23. BIKE TO ORADELL RESERVOIR. 45 mi. Some hills with rest stop to snack with the ducks at the pond in Demarest. Meet 10 AM at Maxwell's Plum (E. 64 & 1st Ave). 30% chance of rain cancels. Amanda and Irving Schachter 212 758-5738

SUN NOV 23. BUCOLIC BIKE RIDE. 32 mi. Meet 10 AM at Whitehouse Mall, Rte. 22. Scenic Somerset Co. ride through Readington & Three Bridges. Lunch stop by cow crossing for a real touch of the countryside. Bring lunch & beverage. Some hills. Anne Christian 201 762-4711

THURS NOV 27. BIKE TO THE CLOISTERS. 20 mi. Thanksgiving, Medieval Style. Meet 10 AM at bike shop at 15th & 6th Ave. Bring lock. Bad weather cancels in favor of brunch. Jay Watt 212 255-7619

SUN NOV 30. ROCKLAND RAMBLE CYCLE TOUR. 50 mi. Meet at 9:30 AM at the GWB bus terminal on Fort Washington Ave. next to the bridge to ride Irv Weisman's beloved NYCC routes through Bergen and Rockland counties. Scenic and quiet with a few hills for exercise. Bring spare tube, pump, etc. Bring or hunt lunch. Alternate meeting site-NJ side of GWB walkway at 10 AM. Gary Meyer 212 928-4187

SUN DEC 7. BIKE BELLE SOUVIERS. 50 mi. Find the Lost Lagoon. Mod terrain, some hills. Bring lunch. Steady rain cancels. Meet 9:45 AM at E. 16 St. & Park Ave. Charles Morris 212 477-3281

SPECIAL LEADERLESS BIKE RIDE SEE PAGE 6.

TA BEGINS NEW PHASE

Transportation Alternatives is in gear for action once again. Our search for leadership has been successful beyond expectations.

Our new president, Charlie Komanoff is a long-time bike commuter, a former economist in City government, and director of a successful consulting firm that pioneered in analyzing the economic problems of the U.S. nuclear power industry. He was active in TA during its early years as well as in Bicycle Commuters of New York.

The TA board also realized that it needed a day to day director. A half-time position was created and we are pleased to announce that Gail Boorstein is our new Executive Director. Boorstein initiated an interesting bicycle parking project in 1984 and has been active in TA for the past year. She is trained as an architect and has worked for the City. Gail describes herself as an organizer and an urban ecologist. Generous contributions from three individuals have funded our director for the first three months. To maintain the position increased membership, grants, and donations from individuals are necessary.

Departing president Charlie McCorkle urged members to avoid using the director position as an excuse to become inactive. In Charlie's words, "the Executive Director should be regarded as a kind of glue. She cannot do the work of TA herself" but her position can catalyze the contributions of participants into an effective voice for New York City bicyclists.

TA's board now consists of: Alan Ginsberg, an active transit and bicycle advocate who was elected vice president; Lou Avitabile, long time vice president and treasurer, Lou guided the board through the process of reconstituting itself; City Cyclist editor Jennifer Sonsini; new members Lucille Lebovitz and Harris Graber; old members Barbara Earnest, Linas Vebeliunas, Charlie McCorkle; Gail Boorstein and Charlie Komanoff.

The following board members resigned: Jane Barker, John Benfatti, Fran Goldstein, Michael Katz, Joseph Vaccaro and Janet Weinberg. TA recognizes and thanks each of them for their contributions to better bicycling in New York City.

LAMONT-DOHERTY GEOLOGICAL OBSERVATORY
OPEN HOUSE: October 18, 1986 10 AM - 3:30 PM

LAMONT-DOHERTY IS ONE OF THE PREMIER SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY IN MARINE BIOLOGY, OCEANOGRAPHY AND THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES. THIS YEAR THEY WILL HOLD SPECIAL LECTURES AND DISPLAYS ON EARTHQUAKES IN NEW YORK STATE AND IN RUSSIA. IT IS AN EASY BIKE RIDE OF ABOUT 12 MILES FROM THE NJ SIDE OF THE GWB ALONG 9W TO THE OBSERVATORY. BRING OR BUY LUNCH. BICYCLES ARE ALLOWED ON THE PROPERTY.

Continued from page 1: **THE STATE OF CYCLING 1986: CRACKDOWN OR TURNAROUND ?**

cyclist per 25 private cars or per 40 other vehicles in Manhattan.

Second, the new City Transportation Commissioner, Ross Sandler, is a veteran environmentalist and an avid cyclist. He's strongly pro-public transit and potentially sympathetic to cyclists' needs. He has to bend to the Mayor and public opinion to some extent, but he could be a real asset to the cycling community.

Third, crisis does breed opportunity. The current mood may be anti-bike, but at least people are aware of us, which is a first step to our turning them around. How to exploit our notoriety? One tool could be a Safe Cyclists Code, spelling out cyclists' responsibilities and asking motorists and pedestrians to do the same (see p. 7). TA is also going to go to the media at every turn to tell our side of the story. And we're working hard on bike access, parking, and everything that matters for better biking around New York. TA needs your help, your labor and, yes, your money. JOIN US!

FINES

For running red lights in an 18 month period:

- 1st violation \$50
- 2nd violation \$100
- 3rd violation..... \$250

For wrong-way riding\$45

Add \$10 to these amounts if you mail in your payment and summons. Fines are the same as those for motor vehicles. Cyclists who have driver's licenses may end up getting their licenses revoked.

THE 7/31 MEETING ON BROOKLYN BIKEWAYS

Ed Rudetsky of NY Cycle Club met with representatives from the Parks Dept., Gateway, Brooklyn Borough President's Office, City and State DOT's; Larry Reilly, Bicycle Coordinator for NYC DOT, chaired.

The Belt Parkway Bikeway: 1) Clarification is needed on each agency's responsibility. 2) DOT will walk new path and report on its condition. 3) Bridges & links in bad shape have repair dates from '87 to ? 4) path at Fountain Ave. landfill - Dept. of Sanitation may reconstruct. 5) Extend/repair plans drafted for Knapp St.-Verranzano Br. path. 6) Plumb Beach to close, replacement may be built at foot of Knapp St. Flatbush Avenue path will get new signs & lane markings. Ocean P'way to get better signs/signals at bike crossings. A path thru the Rockaways to create a Brooklyn-Queens bikeway was rejected in favor of maintaining current paths. Ed ends his letter caustically. By the time this path is finalized he feels we may all be riding it in our wheel chairs. Can TA speed its accomplishment? WE PLAN TO WORK AND WRITE MORE ON THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE.

?? A SAFE CYCLISTS CODE ??

TA thinks the safety and reputation of cycling in NYC could benefit from a set of shared rules that recognize cyclists' needs and responsibilities, particularly regarding pedestrians. Recently, some TA members got together and drafted a possible "Safe Cyclist Code." Their idea is to set a middle course between anarchy (automatically running red lights), and slavish adherence to traffic regulations that often leave cyclists at a disadvantage.

We need your comments. Would you endorse this code? Should TA encourage cyclists to abide by it? Should we modify it? Is this code, or any safety code, worth pursuing? Let us know!

SAFE CYCLISTS CODE

(Proposed -- Comments Please)

1. Never ride the wrong way against traffic.
2. Always yield the right of way to those who have it.
3. Always give law-abiding pedestrians at least 2 feet of space -- more when riding fast. Be especially careful with elderly people.
4. Be audible and visible to pedestrians. Use a bell, and at night wear bright clothes and a light.
5. Ride predictably. Use hand signals, don't weave, etc.

FIVE BOROUGH BICYCLE MAP: MAPPERS NEEDED

Are you willing to share your favorite bicycle routes with new cyclists or cyclists from other boroughs?

Please call Gail at (212) 866-7489 for a mapping kit.

BUILDING A BIKE MAP LIBRARY.

BICYCLE ROUTES IN THE WASHINGTON AREA. This is a must map for bicyclists going to Washington, DC. The map lists all the streets in the Washington area with the bicycle routes clearly marked. The map outlines a lovely bicycle route from Washington to Mount Vernon. The only flaw is the map unfolds to 3"x4".

Send \$5.00 payable to MWCOG:
Information Center
Metropolitan Wash Coun. of Government
1875 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006

A REPORT ON TA'S BIKE REPAIR DAY, 8/24

Carl Hultberg, our trusty repairman did a brisk trade all day. Several bikers stopped to get advice about and have their cycles checked. We made many new contacts.

Next time around we'll choose a different location. 92nd and East Drive is overrun with Road Runners on Saturday mornings. So much so that we never met up with our refreshments and Gail Greene. But thanks for your efforts Gail!

CUT HERE

SEND TO: TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES, 2121 BROADWAY, NY, NY 10023

Okay. I'm pushing for pedals. Here's my check made out to Transportation Alternatives.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE _____ ZIP _____

PROFESSION _____

HOME PHONE _____

BUSINESS PHONE _____

- \$15 Regular membership
 - \$20 Regular membership + TA T-shirt.
Size: S, M, L, XL
 - \$25 Dual regular membership (2 people at same address)
 - \$35 Sustaining member (+ T-shirt and Brooklyn bike map)
 - \$100 Patron (+ T-shirt and Brooklyn bike map)
 - \$6 T-shirt with TA biker logo. Size: S, M, L, XL
 - \$3 Brooklyn Biker map
- \$ _____ Total amount enclosed

HERE ARE MY SUGGESTIONS FOR GOALS TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SHOULD PURSUE:

I'm interested in volunteering more than just money! I can help with:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Art work and graphics | (10) <input type="checkbox"/> Letterwriting |
| (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Attending hearings, meetings | (11) <input type="checkbox"/> Membership recruitment |
| (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Bike maintenance | (12) <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Clerical work | (13) <input type="checkbox"/> Printing |
| (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering/planning skills | (14) <input type="checkbox"/> Safety |
| (6) <input type="checkbox"/> Fund raising | (15) <input type="checkbox"/> Street fairs, rallies |
| (7) <input type="checkbox"/> Leading bike rides | (16) <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone calls |
| (8) <input type="checkbox"/> Leafletting | (17) <input type="checkbox"/> Typesetting |
| (9) <input type="checkbox"/> Legal work | (18) <input type="checkbox"/> Writing articles |
| | (19) <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

BIKE TRAFFIC UPDATES

> New First Avenue bikelane from 72nd to 125th Street is nearly complete. Road is resurfaced and lane marking is in place. Bike stencils are not yet applied north of 96th Street.

> Belt Parkway bikepath has been resurfaced from Knapp Street to Fresh Creek Bridge, i.e. most of the path. Work has been completed except around the bridges.

> Staten Island: Father Capadano Boulevard has been resurfaced and an improved bikelane is in place.

> On the Brooklyn Bridge watch signs, stencils and pedestrians. At rush hour all works well, but at other hours tourists step out to admire the view and bikers are blamed for hitting them.

> George Washington Bridge "walk your bike" rule still stands but the Port Authority apparently halted its recent enforcement policy.

> Enforcement is cooling off but here are some hot ticketing spots: WTC, 6th/Canal, 14th/3rd, several spots along 23rd, 28th/3rd, 28th/6th. Enforcement was in effect as far north as 72nd but mainly south of 55th.

> Between July 22 and September 7th, 7,662 summonses were handed out to cyclists. Of these 2,768 were for violations of the commercial bicycle law. One in 4 cyclists ran red lights before the crackdown, 1 in 10 now, according to midtown traffic counts. Many summonses are ignored.

RETIRING WITH A RECORD

The NYC bicycling community owes heartfelt thanks to Charlie McCorkle. He retires, after seven years as TA president, with a formidable list of accomplishments. Ever so slowly our Department of Transportation completes the citywide network of bikelanes that is its policy in large measure due to McCorkle's work. The recreational bikelanes in Prospect and Central Parks and the fully ramped access to the Brooklyn Bridge are more examples of the energy he devoted to, as he says, "getting stuff for bikes into future plans".

One of the fondest recollections of McCorkle's tenure dates from 1981 when the City closed the Brooklyn Bridge bikelane due to a snapped cable. Two hundred people participated in a protest and McCorkle led 11 fellow cyclists onto the bridge. They are the only bicyclists in the United States to be arrested for civil disobedience.

McCorkle's tireless service to bicycling ranges from engineering to human. One day he demonstrates to Port Authority lawyers the mathematical improbability of their contention that a cyclist might fly over the George Washington bridge railings, the next day he responds to a non hypothetical cyclist who has been stabbed and robbed. He will remain a member of the TA board and a vital center of the NYC cycling community. Thank you Charlie.

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