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Date: August 16, 2000 12:13 PM

Author: Ethan Gelber (ethang@gorp.com)

Subject: Should the state know who's out there?

There are laws governing the use of cars. This is due, in part, to the training required before legally operating a motorized vehicle. This is also an important control factor when it comes to punishing drivers who choose not to obey the laws that make the roads and byways safe for other drivers and, more importantly, people using less armored, alternative means of transportation.

Recently, attention has been called to the possibility of licensing cyclists. I'm not sure why. Is it because someone now thinks of bicycles as a complex vehicle requiring training before operation in public areas? Or is it because doling out punishment for infractions has been haphazard and securing payment practically unenforcable? Perhaps community groups -- especially those that have proven to be distinctly unfriendly to cyclists -- feel that the roads aren't already unmanageable enough.

During moments of weakness, I can almost see the logic. In New York City (where I live), there are far too many cyclists on the streets who ignore traffic regulations. Some measure of control is needed to regulate them and the negative impact they make on everyone's understanding of a cyclist's rights and responsibilities. On the other hand, I can see licenses for cyclists giving policemen an excuse to punish the very people who are trying to assert a right to fair space on the road.

Shouldn't more attention be given to drivers' unwillingness to share the roads? Shouldn't proper protection of the few cycling paths and lanes be more effectively enforced? Do we really need to be licensed? Would you register? Let us know what you think.

(http://gorpforums.gorp.com/forums/Index.cfm?CFApp=52&Message_ID=41744)

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Date: August 17, 2000 03:56 AM

Author: Steve Collier (steve@steve3.screaming.net)

Subject: A new tax?

A license for cyclists? I haven't yet seen a license for anything that makes people behave responsibly once they have the license.

Here in London many cyclists also become a menace to other road users but most of the time they are already breaking the law so a license isn't going to help.

The only benefit I can see from a license scheme is for the authorities that would administer it. In order to actually obtain a license no doubt a fee would have to be paid. Then there is any training that would have to be taken. That would also have to be paid for.

If any money raised was used to improve cycle paths and make things safer then it might be justified but would the money really be spent on that or would this just be another form of taxation?

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Date: September 04, 2000 09:29 PM

Author: Chris Sigmund (CSigmund@msn.com)

Subject: The silly bike liscence

Seems to me that this idea only comes from non-cycling motorists who are annoyed that they have to get liscences and cyclists dont. They don't like having to share the road, and this seems like an easy way to limit the people able to use it outside an automobile. Does this mean we'll require pernits for kids riding around their neighborhood or to the corner store? What will be the age requirement for this liscence? What if someone can't afford to buy the liscence or training? Tough luck, you now have to walk the 10 miles to work. Driving requires a liscence for the same reason owning a handgun or performing surgery does. It is potentially lethal and requires responsibility and training to perform safely.

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