

On The Road

Journal of the Association of British Drivers MAY 1994



TRANSPORT MINISTER CALLS FOR SPEED LIMITERS ON CARS

ROGER Freeman Transport Minister appearing on the Central TV programme "Your Shout" transmitted live on Sunday 13th March this year, proposed that all cars, new and second hand, are fitted with speed limiters.

The representative from ROSPA present said that Ministers proposal was "Music to my ears".

Brian Gregory ABD Chairman also present had argued forcefully for an increased and variable motorway speed limit.

ROSPA has been campaigning for the compulsory fitting of speed limiters to all cars for many years.

ABD committee members suspect that this proposal is supported by some of the so called motoring organisations.

Brian Gregory has urged all members to write to their MP's to protest against this non sensible idea!

So this is Justice?

Two motorists this week received widely differing treatment from our erratic "justice" system for having committed an apparently similar motoring offence: travelling at 103mph.

One, a Ms.Jacqueline Field, had a 12 month ban & compulsory re-test quashed after a camera conviction for travelling at 103mph in a 60mph limit. The judge decided that: "By a whisker, we cannot be sure that your driving was not that of a careful & competent driver".

On the other hand, Mr.Neil Kinnock, the former leader of the Labour party, received a ban for travelling at 103mph on the M11.

There is no doubt that the full circumstances of any motoring offence should be considered before the defendant's penalty is decided; but I cannot understand how it can be that if Ms.Field's conduct was broadly considered to be consistent with that of a "careful & competent" driver, Mr.Kinnock's was not. After all, Mr.K. was on a motorway at the time!

I must also confess that the media hype which surrounds such

cases as Mr.Kinnock's leaves me bewildered: why should motorway travel at a speed which would be considered commonplace on the very safe, high-speed Autobahnen of the former West German generate such sensationalist coverage here in the UK? Are we really such incompetent drivers that we cannot be given at least some latitude, naturally according to road conditions & traffic density, beyond the clearly discredited 70mph maximum motorway speed limit?

Brian Gregory

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS MOVE AGAINST MOTORISTS

PADDY Ashdown, leader of the Liberal Democrats, has committed his party to scrapping 41 road improvement schemes throughout the country, including most of the motorway improvement schemes which have managed to survive the MacGregor axe. Ashdown trotted out the same tired old arguments about "pollution" and "asthma", as if the car was solely or even mainly responsible for either problem (we know it isn't in respect of the first, and it almost certainly isn't in respect of the second).

He even mentioned "congestion" as a reason for scrapping them -though how NOT building roads will help reduce that is beyond us.

When will ANY of our politicians realise that the best route to cleaner air and less CO2 emissions is a programme embracing ALL sources of pollution, including industry and private homes. The car needs to be part of it, but producing cleaner more efficient cars and ensuring that they are maintained to stay that way will be far more effective in cleaning the air and be far less unpopular into the bargain.

MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS SUCCESSES FOR THE ABD

Since the last edition of On The Road was published:-

1. Brian Gregory has appeared on the panel on Central TV's YOUR SHOUT programme.

2. ABD delegates have attended the launch of AUTOFORUM, a new pressure group which aims to put the case for the motor car. Brian Gregory was invited to speak at the launch, and the ABD will be part of that

organisation.

3. We have received further follow up from the Renault magazine "Autoworld", who conducted a survey on attitudes to speed and speed limits among their readership.

4. AutoExpress have used some of our material on road casualties in relation to speed limits.

Look inside this issue of On The Road for more details of these successes.

Further interviews with journalists and TV presenters are in the pipeline and details will follow.

Car stickers and a brochure are in the final stages of preparation and will be with you shortly.

A national launchday and press conference is planned; membership is increasing, but we MUST keep up the good work. The aim is to have attracted 5000 members by the end of 1996.

BUT - this is YOUR Association. we particularly like to see new faces at our regular meetings at Mackworth near Derby: all are welcome.

This is YOUR newsletter. Please let us have your news and your views. we will select the best articles for publication. We will select the best articles for publication. We also want to know what you think of:-

- # toll roads
- # the cuts in the road programme
- # speed limits
- # GATSO cameras
- # motor taxation
- # autocrime

ABD TEAMS UP WITH AUTOFORUM

MEMBERS will remember from our February newsletter that the ABD has established links with the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. The aim was to discuss areas of interest which are of common interest to the motor trade and the motorist: we are after all, their customers and it stands to reason that they will not welcome measures that dissuade us from buying, using or enjoying the cars they build and sell.

As a result of those contacts, Chairman Brian Gregory and delegates Jonathon Newby-Robson and Julian Rowden were invited to attend the launch of a new pressure group called AUTOFORUM, which took place at the Mayfair headquarters of the SMMT on the 21st March 1994.

AUTOFORUM is a broad alliance

including motor industry management, Trade Unions, the Automobile Association and ourselves, and has the support of the SMMT and the British Road Federation. AUTOFORUM's brief is to fight for the future of the motor car as well as the motor industry in this country.

AUTOFORUM contends that Great Britain, alone among developed nations, has failed to appreciate the contribution that motor manufacturing has made to the social economic and environmental fabric of the modern world. This has not only damaged our motor manufacturing industry but has also given licence to the sustained attack launched by pressure groups against the motor car and the freedom, independence and opportunities it has given to countless ordinary people.

The Secretary to AUTOFORUM is Gordon Lee, a trade unionist and committed supporter of the motor industry. We look forward to working with him.

Roger King, Director of Public Affairs at the SMMT, Richard Diment of the British Road Federation, Gordon Lee and ABD Chairman Brian Gregory all addressed an audience of industrialists, trade unionists and the press at the launch. All pledged their support for the campaign.

Brian Gregory addressed the concerns of the car user - all of us - as the government proposes ever more intrusive anti-car legislation. He lamented the apparent lack of a coherent strategy from the established motoring organisations to counter these threats. Brian Gregory confirmed the intention of the ABD to participate fully in AUTOFORUM.

Brian Gregory was also interviewed by John Langley, motoring correspondent with the Daily Telegraph, as a result of which the ABD was briefly featured in that paper.

As a direct result of our involvement in AUTOFORUM we have been promised assistance in organising a national launch day and press conference later this year, possibly in September. details to follow...watch this space.

BUT, please remember,

YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT IS VITAL.

Would You Rely on a Transport Policy from These People?

THERE was a horrible inevitability about the current transport situation. It was exactly what I feared was in store for Britain's motorists when I saw the Daily Mail Motoring Supplement that sparked off the ABD's formation.

It talked of a motoring regime worthy of Red China or Nazi Germany: total oppression; we, now rapidly (& totally unjustly) being branded the Sinning Motorists, the source of all the nation's economic & ecological problems, were to be a Hunted Species the target for vilification & exploitation. No matter that the motor vehicle is a minor contributor to the pollution problem if that even exists.

No matter that it has given & continues to give untold mobility, freedom & pleasure to millions of motorists, UK & worldwide. No matter that it has enriched & benefitted countless lives & been in large part responsible for the economic development & progress of this & every other developed country since its invention.

Now an unholy alliance of the Government & the Dark Greens, the New Luddites, wish to see the clock turned back to a totalitarian world where individual freedom of movement is restricted even curtailed substantially. They want us to be the serfs to the oppression of State revenue-raising aspirations (make no mistake revenue potential is the only reason that Government has suddenly gone a deep shade of green); & to the factwarping terrorism of doom mongering environmentalist zealots who see petrifying the public with grossly exaggerated or totally untrue predictions of world

cataclysm as way of bolstering their egos & their power bases.

The fact that validity of the Greenhouse Effect theory is now largely undermined shows the extent to which extreme environmentalists can work up any scientifically absurd proposition into a world-threatening scenario & peddle it to the sensationalist media. The New Dark Age beckons. We should spurn it as surely & as firmly as the Eastern European countries have spurned the yoke of Communism.

Can these people really seriously expect the car-owning public to stand for a situation in which they are forced not encouraged, mind you out of their comfortable, safe, economical personal transportation onto a totally inadequate, chronically underfunded & unreliable public transport system consisting of inefficient, erratic & often dirty, smelly buses, trains etc..?

Forget it! Long live Freedom of Choice! Long live The Car! If you feel the same way, spread the message amongst your friends: The Association of British Drivers will fight to preserve YOUR freedom of mobility & freedom of choice.

Personally, I wouldn't trust the Department of Transport or the Government (& still less the lunatic environmentalist fringe) to organise a whisky-tasting in a Distillery or at least not without taking precautions to ensure they didn't water down the spirit, debase it with industrial alcohol & also help themselves to the till takings!

What do YOU think??

Ain't That the Truth!

RECENTLY I participated in a Central TV panel plus invited audience discussion programme called "Your Shout". On the panel was Roger Freeman, the Roads Minister.

The opening topic related to William Waldegrave's statement to the Scott Enquiry that Ministers weren't always entirely truthful to Parliament. Mr. Freeman was at great pains to state that he had never knowingly misled Parliament. It's a pity he appears to be much less concerned about misleading the public!

His next contribution to the proceedings was to state that speed was the major contributor to all accidents, for which reason the Government was once again proposing the installation of limiters in all new cars. We have already established the ludicrousness of this proposal elsewhere in the newsletter, so I won't again go into the reasons why this halfbaked suggestion has been slated by all the major motoring organisations including ourselves, & also by several car manufacturers.

Let's be crystal clear on this: even the DoT's biased, slanted

brochure "Killing Speed & Saving Lives" states that "between 22 & 32 per cent of accidents had excessive speed as a contributory factor" not as the only factor, or the main factor; merely as a contributory one!

In other words, in nearly three-quarters of all accidents, excessive speed is not a contributory factor. It is not excessive speed, but lack of concentration & consequent inappropriate use of speed for the prevailing conditions (as frequently too little as too much; & by pedestrians, cyclists etc as well as motorists) that causes accidents. Again, it is better road user education that is needed, not stupid & Draconian restrictions (except possibly for the introduction of a jaywalking offence in the UK as exists in the United States & Germany).

So, if Mr. Freeman was not knowingly misleading the public, we can only assume that he knows very little. He should therefore either wise up, shut up, or get out & let someone who knows rather more take over!

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels

IT is exactly as we feared: "Transport" Minister, Robert Key, has announced that lower motorway speed limits are to be introduced to "reduce congestion". Drivers will "have to get used" to travelling slower to keep traffic moving, is the official line. From what source will this congestion be arising? Only the Department of Transport itself: the 1989 "Roads to Prosperity" road building budget is to be "reviewed" (for which read slashed). "Building ever more roads is no longer an option," we are told. And yet we motorists are to be asked to fork out additional amounts (in the way of motorway &

trunk road tolls, road charging etc.) beyond the extortionate £22 thousand million we already contribute to the nation's finances (for a current £5.5 thousand million road investment payback). We are going to get the toll charges, but not the roads we were promised in return.

Haven't we already paid out too much, for too long & for too little in return? I would suggest that Robert Key be offered the post of Minister of Statics, Propaganda & Disinformation. It would suit him much better; Goebbels would have been proud of him!

Speed Limiters ? - You must be joking Minister!

ONCE more, the subject of speed limiters has raised its ugly head. During the recent Central TV programme, YOUR SHOUT, on which ABD Chairman, Brian Gregory, appeared on the panel, Roger Freeman, Minister for Roads, said again that the government was proposing the compulsory fitment of speed limiters to all new cars (see "Ain't That the Truth" in this issue).

Here are four reasons, for starters, why the idea is as outrageous as it is stupid:

1. Already, too many drivers think that 70 mph must be a safe speed, regardless of road and weather conditions, simply because it is "legal". The problem of drivers travelling with "their feet on the floor" would doubtless be ten times worse if they knew there was a limiter fitted to the car.

2. As it would not be feasible to fit limiters to existing cars, the market for new ones would slump. Who would buy a Porsche 911 with a limiter? Second hand cars would suddenly be worth more than new ones, and the welcome trend towards safer and cleaner cars in this country would be seriously slowed down. Industry would be hurt and so would the environment.

3. Picture this: you have been following a high vehicle, perhaps a caravan or a small lorry for miles. It is travelling at a slow speed and the driver has not pulled in to let you pass. Suddenly you see

a clear straight. You pull out to overtake, but as you pass you see that there is another very slow vehicle in front. A car appears coming the other way. You have gone too far to pull back easily and the gap you came out of has been filled anyway, and there is insufficient room to pull in front. So, you accelerate past as quickly as you can to get back to your own side. But what would happen if the limiter cut in?

4. The 70 mph limit is only a REGIONAL SPEED LIMIT APPLICABLE WITHIN THE U.K. It does not apply in the rest of Europe, it does not even apply on the Isle of Man. A speed limiter would have the effect of imposing an outdated and archaic British limit on drivers using the French autoroute (130kph/81mph) and the German autobahn (no limit on many stretches). Over 2 million British registered vehicles now cross the Channel every year, and that number is set to rise dramatically with the opening of the Channel Tunnel. We take the view that the British government has no business controlling the speeds of cars used outside its own national boundaries.

No speed limiter is going to have any effect on urban speeds, which affect the areas where the vast majority of accidents and casualties occur. The fact that limiters are on the political agenda at all is an unbelievable display of arrogance from a government out of touch with the people they think they represent.

Town Planning, The Motorcar and You

SINCE the last edition was published, Environment Secretary John Gummer has confirmed the government's PPG13 planning guidelines, supposedly to curb so-called "out of town" development - although it goes much further than that (see OTR February).

It is being marketed in glowing terms: "putting the heart back into our towns and cities", "increasing transport choice" and "reducing our dependence on the car" are some of the phrases used to sell the policy.

Strip out the DoE doublespeak, and it actually means: less parking in towns, no coherent strategy for transport, and less choice of means of transport. The whole package is so ill thought out that the construction industry is in a state of alarm about its possible effects. Every property developer knows that if you build a parade of shops, an office development or a factory unit without good car access and parking, you will be left with an empty development and a bank loan that you cannot repay.

In fact the "guidelines" (that word itself is a misnomer - the DoE itself has made it clear to local authorities that they are not an "option" but directives that "must be adhered to") are so bad that Gummer's cabinet colleague John Redwood, Secretary of State for Wales, has said that they will not apply to Wales. His reasoning is that they might damage prospects for economic recovery in the Principality. We congratulate him - but what about the prospects for recovery in England?

Gummer gives no clues as to how people are supposed to get in and out of city centres in his brave new world - especially after MacGregor, Transport Minister, decided to cancel a whole series of new urban road projects. The planning package itself says that

car parking is to be CUT not increased. Even park and ride schemes are not to be encouraged. There are the usual vague expressions of hope that people will switch to public transport, but without the slightest idea as to how that is either to be achieved or financed. Both the Birmingham/West Midlands and the Bristol area have expressed interest in building metro style rail/tram systems emulating the small but highly successful Manchester project, but no money has been found to pay for them and both projects remain on the drawing board.

The reality of public transport in all to many towns and cities is a seat (if you are lucky) at the back of a Transit van, so old that the Post Office would not use it to deliver parcels in anymore. The fact is that there is no public transport system capable of taking over more than the tiniest fraction of the journeys currently undertaken by car. Nor is there any evidence that the majority of the travelling public wants to make the switch. Nobody has asked them. One thing is certain: the government will not ask, because they know all too well what the answer would be.

The absolute height of stupidity is perhaps reserved for the section dealing with new housing developments, which are supposed to get the minimum of parking provision along with all other developments. Even if they "leave their cars at home" as Gummer dreams, where are the occupiers of these new homes going to put them?

It is too early to say how strictly all of this will be interpreted and enforced, but the danger is that Gummer will make the same mess of the planning system that his colleagues are already making in the Department of Transport.

That Really is The Limit!

DURING Central TV's "Your Shout" programme on March 13th, 1994, Transport Minister Roger Freeman, speaking on behalf of the Government, again proposed the compulsory fitment of speed limiters to all cars - despite overwhelming opposition from all the major transport organisations & the vast majority of motorists - & also in spite of the fact that UK motorways, our highest speed roads, are also comprehensively our safest ones.

We consider that this ludicrous suggestion, if enacted, will actually cost far more lives than it will save; & maintain that a progressive & enlightened transport policy, coupled with better driver education, will do far more to save lives than any further repressive, & ultimately counter-productive restrictions on personal mobility. Are the Government prepared to review all the evidence (not just that which they choose to select) & submit their road transport performance to trial by the media? Let's look at their most recent proposals:

- Tolling motorways & major roads
- Road charging on urban roads
- Restricting further "out of town" shopping development
- Redeveloping existing in-town car parking facilities over to alternative purposes
- Further reductions in non-urban (& particularly motorway) speed limits
- Compulsory fitment of speed limiters
- Constant electronic surveillance of all motorists.

It's time to expose the basic dishonesty of this container of excrement the Government is calling a Transport Policy. Tolling

And Speaking of limits.....

RENAULT UK recently carried out a survey of the opinions (titled, "Testing the Limits") of over 3,500 of its customers. The results were very illuminating regarding what the public thinks the motorway speed limit should be under "moderately busy & dry weather" conditions:

Of those who held a firm opinion on the motorway speed limit two-thirds would like to see it increased.

And from all respondents.

54% of motorists want the motorway speed limit increased; only 28% were opposed.

98% of motorists would respect a 90mph motorway speed limit.

will transfer traffic off motorways & onto less safe major & minor roads. Accident rates on these roads will inevitably rise & Government will use this - the result of their malign actions, don't forget - to justify further speed limit reductions. These proposals are anti-libertarian. The so-called Freedom Association has totally ignored my two letters to them on this topic to date. Nearly 2/3rd of all road deaths & serious injuries occur in areas with 40mph or lower speed limits. Motorways, on the other hand, are both our highest speed - & comprehensively (by a factor of some 10 times) our safest - roads.

What we require to make our motorways safer is not further blanket speed reductions, but variable speed limits according to conditions (with reductions when they are poor, traffic heavy & accident risk high; & increases to at least 85mph when conditions are good, traffic light & accident risk therefore negligible - & so that the limit is worthy of respect); coupled with much more intense driver education regarding the importance of maintaining a safe following distance from the preceding vehicle & maintaining a high level of lane discipline. This is exactly the approach ("Intelligente Autobahnen") being adopted in Germany, despite their Autobahnen already being safer than US freeways & substantially safer than most of the other European motorway networks. The "Intelligente Autobahnen" approach will ultimately result in Germany having large tracts of speed restriction-free Autobahnen coupled with better (rather than very slightly worse as at present) motorway casualty rates than the UK's.

Speed limiter fitment will cost more lives in urban & cross-country driving; while it will save none on motorways, where following too close, rather than simplistically speed, is the real problem. All the objective & clear-thinking major motoring organisations are totally opposed to this limiter proposal.

While the objectives of the ABD are entirely non-party political, we intend wholeheartedly to oppose the viper's nest of proposals the Government has outlined & we will take every opportunity to expose this half-baked patchwork quilt of a so-called Transport Policy to ridicule.

71% of motorists would be opposed to any decrease in the motorway speed limit; only 5% would actually like to see a decrease.

70% of motorists would like to see variable motorway speed limits according to road conditions, 10% were opposed.

90% of motorists want motorway driving as part of the driving test; 5% were opposed.

These findings are largely in agreement with a similar customer opinion survey carried out by the Ford Motor Company in 1993.

Nice to know we hold the moral high ground, isn't it?

The motorist feeds the Chancellors "Awful Hole" - The Budget

Company Car Tax Scales

Members who receive company cars are unlikely to have missed the news that the benefit the taxman considers they receive is to be taxed in a completely different way from 6th April of this year.

The new scales are as follows:-

Business mileage	Car under	Car over
	4 yrs old % of list price	4 yrs old % of list price
0 - 2,499	35%	23.33%
2,500 - 17,999	23.33%	15.55%
18,000 or more	11.33%	7.78%

The list price is based on the manufacturers list price including options, subject to a maximum of £80,000.

The new fuel scales are as follows:-

Cylinder capacity	Petrol	Diesel
1400cc or less	£ 640	£ 580
1401 to 2000cc	£ 810	£ 580
over 2000cc	£1200	£ 750

As part of the deliberate policy of the government to grab as much money from taxpayers generally and motorists in particular, most company car drivers will lose out.

However it is possible to gain, if you choose carefully. The lower the list price of the car - and remember that any discount you negotiate with the dealer is ignored for this purpose - the lower your tax bill will be. There is thus an incentive to choose a lower specification car rather than one of the better dressed versions. This may seem like bad news, but, unlike the previous system, engine capacity is irrelevant (unless you get free fuel), so a Rover 416Si at £12,535 for example is almost certainly a much more sensible choice than the better equipped but slower Rover 414SLi at £12,435, and bring with it a lower tax bill.

There is also no reason to make do with a car with just under 2000cc and under £19,250 (the old tax break). The highly acclaimed Vauxhall Cavalier 2.5 V6 at £17,035 and VW Golf 2.8 VR6 at £19,049, both with sweet 6 cylinder engines are both winners in the new regime, and might be a good alternative to a Mondeo 2.0i Ghia or lower end of the range Granada, with 4 cylinder engines, less power and just as much tax to pay. As before, a powerful or luxurious used car, just over four years old, could be an extremely tax efficient choice if you can arrange it.

How will the Private Buyer be Affected

One effect, already showing through is that car makers are lowering the inflated list prices charged on some models, as this directly benefits company car drivers. Prices are likely to remain stable or even fall. Private buyers have long been able to pick up large, well equipped ex-fleet cars at bargain prices, and the supply of these may diminish. This will particularly affect Ford Scorpios, Vauxhall Carltons and Rover 800s all of which depreciate very fast at present.

Also, if, as predicted, company car drivers start choosing lower power base models rather than the well dressed ones favoured to date, that may cause the better versions to be in short supply on the second hand market in three years time. The laws of supply and demand might then cause the Ghias, SRis and GSis to hold their value better. If this is true then the private buyer might do better to choose one of these if buying now. Time will tell.

Fuel Excise Duty & VAT - Budget changes pence

Per Litre	Before	After	Proposed Motorway Tolls		per Mile
Cost - unleaded	15.3	15.3			
Fuel Excise Duty	27.8	30.8	@ 70 mph	1.5	
Vat	7.5	8.1	@ 75 mph	6.5	
Total price	50.6	54.2	@ 80 mph	11.5	
			@ 85 mph	16.5	
			@ 90 mph	21.5	
Total Tax	35.3	38.9			
Tax % of cost	231%	254%			
Tax % of price	69%	72%			
			NB Rates will be higher than this in Peak periods		
Tax per mile - @ 30 mpg	5.3	5.8			

Join The Association of British Drivers Now!

The Association of British Drivers held its first meeting in Derby on September 26th, 1992. Our objective is to provide an active, responsible voice & lobby for the beleaguered British car driver.

Formed by a number of responsible people from all walks of life & including long standing members of the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

The Association wholly rejects proposals for trunk road and motorway toll charges and road pricing as an unprovoked and totally unjustified assault on the liberties and livelihoods of Britain's motorists. Government already extracts FOUR TIMES AS MUCH from British Motorists as it ploughs back into transport related projects. It is therefore completely unacceptable for Government to suggest that British road users should be compelled to further contribute (even to the extent of the lowest reported estimate of an additional £15 to £20 per month) for the "privilege" of using badly maintained urban and rural roads, and often congested and persistently under-engineered motorways; to which latter roads are frequently applied an ineffective (in road safety terms) traffic control policy and an archaic speed limit policy.

The Associated considers the placing of speed cameras on the safest roads in the country, our motorways, to be little more than a cynical, revenue generating measure; like toll charges and urban road pricing.

It does, however, WHOLLY SUPPORT the positioning of cameras at such places as traffic lights and in other urban locations, where they can be expected to make a genuine contribution to Government's stated aim of reducing road casualties.

If the purpose of the 1991 Road Traffic Act is to reduce road casualties, then the enforcement and punishment policy is topsy-turvy when a driver travelling at 40 mph in a 30 mph zone (33% above the limit) is much more likely to be involved in a fatal accident, and yet remain un-apprehended; while the points penalty and fine which can be imposed on a driver proceeding responsibly at 93 mph (the same proportion, 33%, above the speed limit) on an empty motorway (who is much less likely to be involved in an accident) could be substantially stiffer under the provisions of this Act.

This is a nonsense: there is no correspondence between the points penalty and the seriousness of the offence. Many people may be unaware that two minor motoring offences within a three year period could now result in loss of driving licence, and hence liberty, for 6 months. Surely, if Government's concern is truly road safety, and not merely revenue, penalties and fines should be assessed to reflect the TRUE ROAD SAFETY IMPLICATIONS of a given offence.

Clearly, the main thrust of Government road safety policy should be to educate motorists to obey REALISTIC speed limits and above all else to make safe use of speed and stopping distance on all roads. Unrealistic speed limits are unlikely to be respected, and those drivers apprehended will merely feel aggrieved at being persecuted (and prosecuted) illogically.

A transport policy as blatantly mercenary as this is currently proposed is a indisputable indication that Government is totally unconcerned with road safety, and committed only to extorting as much from the British road user as is conceivably obtainable. The Association of British Drivers aims to bring these vital transport issues (with their worrying implications for the preservation of individual liberty) to the forefront of the political agenda; with the objective of, if necessary, influencing the voting intentions of road users in the direction of whichever political party offers them the fairest, most logical, consistent and truly road-safety conscious set of policies.

The detailed objectives of the Association of British Drivers include:-

Just fill in the form below

Counter Anti-motorist Lobbies

[Deleted as out of date.]

Oppose Unnecessary and Oppressive Policing

Oppose Unreasonable Motoring Taxation, Fines and Toll Charges

Campaign to Raise Driving Standards

Campaign to Raise Vehicle & Road Safety Standards

Campaign to Raise The Motorway Speed Limit in Safe Traffic Conditions

Promote The Responsible Use of Modern Traffic Control Technology

Campaign to Achieve An Increase in Transport Investment Funding

Achieve Effective Communication between the Government and the Motorist

□ _____ □

Don't delay! As a motorist your liberty and your wallet is under threat. Join the Association of British Drivers and help other ordinary motorists campaign to protect our right to drive on British roads without being subject to unreasonable speed limits, unfair fines, tolls and gross over taxation.

□ _____ □

Join "The Pro Motor Campaign".

Contact The Association of British Drivers,

details overleaf.

Road Pricing in Germany

GERMANY is pushing ahead with its proposals to introduce electronic tolling on the autobahn. The subject is however the source of heated debate among politicians and others, with strong popular opposition. The German ADAC motoring organisation is working hard to protect its members interests.

It seems likely that, if it goes ahead, it will be coupled with a sharp drop in road tax (the so-called "road fund licence") to compensate. Drivers of small clean and efficient cars are likely to find the road tax abolished altogether.

French incentives to car buyers

THE French government has been offering incentives to encourage drivers of 10 year old ones to trade them in for brand new ones. The measure is estimated to have caused 150,000 extra sales this year, and is both helping French industry, and, at the same time, cleaning the environment as older polluters are scrapped in favour of catalysed models. The measures include a payment of FF5,000 (£570) to car owners trading in their bangers.

England tops car theft league yet again

ENGLAND and Wales once more top the international league for car theft. 3.3% of car owners had their cars stolen, compared

to 0.5% in Germany and Holland, and 0.6% in Japan. Even in the USA the figure was only 2.5%. The number of vehicles involved, at 600,000, is more than the total sales of new cars in Belgium. Increasingly 4X4 vehicles are becoming targets, too.

Get your voice heard

READERS will know that Autoworld, the Renault owners magazine has carried out a survey of their readers views on motoring issues. By now we expect that most members will have contacted their MPs with their views.

If you drive a different make of car, can we suggest you contact the manufacturer/importer to find out what they are doing to fight for their customers interests.

Also, if you are a member of the AA or RAC, LET THEM KNOW WHAT THEIR MEMBERS THINK. There is no need to mention the ABD, but do quote your membership number. The addresses are:-

RAC PUBLIC AFFAIRS,
114, Rochester Row,
LONDON,
SW1P 1JQ

The Automobile Association
Norfolk House,
Priestley Road,
BASINGSTOKE
Hampshire
RG24 9NY

Members Letters

SIR The assertion that transport contributes no more than about twenty per

cent of man made pollutants is no surprise. I am sure that it is more than just an assertion. I hear that the manufacture of a motorcar uses more energy than the vehicle uses through out its entire life. Some say ten times as much. Since motor manufacturing is but a small part of heavy industry, it follows that the bulk of man- made pollution cannot be blamed on cars.

The above is, of course, a rough and ready argument, and I would not wish to push it too far. What I do find very surprising is that man-made emissions are only five percent of the total. It is not stated what gases we are talking about. Carbon dioxide, I can readily understand. I also remember, coming to think about it, Motor magazine quoting similar figures in 1973; but whether that report referred to all toxic gases output by vehicles, I am unsure.

If it is really true that 95% of pollution is natural the consequences are enormous. If this the case, there must always have been current levels of output and therefore the levels of output and therefore the levels of these gases in the atmosphere cannot be much higher than they have ever been. There must be sinks which rid the air of these poisons.

We are still left with urban pollution, however, and for - this reason - I fear that we may have to accept town and city centre road charging. Partly for this reason, motorway tolls seem particularly barmy, as they would encourage urban road travel.

On the subject of speed limits, the ABD is concentrating on motorway limits. To my mind the town restrictions are more absurd. The variation in conditions is much greater - making a single speed even less appropriate. Yet, the latter has become a sacred cow and the ABD is probably wise to attempt the possible. I doubt that we will succeed here, though we have to try.

Lance Green

Association of British Drivers 1st NATIONAL DAY

THE first ABD National Day will be held during a weekend later this year, at a Midlands venue to be announced in due course. The agenda for the Day will also be available shortly. Members of the automotive & national press will also be attending. Roger King, the Public Affairs Director of the Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders (the SMMT) has offered both to attend & address the gathering, & for the SMMT to provide

support with regard to the funding of the event. Delegates will therefore only be asked to pay for their overnight accommodation and evening meal etc. if they require this.

Please support this event - it is in your interest to do so if at all possible: properly managed, & with an adequate membership turnout, it will gain us more favourable media recognition, increase membership numbers & hopefully also make

Government realise that motorists' views & needs can no longer be wilfully ignored.

We need some reasonably firm preliminary estimates of likely numbers of attendees. Please fill in & return the attached tear-off slip, giving an honest indication of your intention to attend this event or otherwise, & only give a positive response if there is a better than 80% chance of your being there.

It is my intention to attend the First ABD National Day

Signed _____