

Vile Calumnies

A Statement of High Political Principles.

I'll vote for anyone who say's they'll abolish speed cameras. That's it. I don't care what else they say they'll do – hang the unemployed, send poor people's children up rich people's chimneys to lick them 'til they shine, all is but tedious detail beside one beautiful noble dream; that the highways of England shall be free once again for the freemen of England to thrash down them at any speed we damn well see fit.

Oh, I can hear the chorus of disapproval already – “speed cameras save lives” they're saying, pointing to statistics that purport to show fewer pedestrians have been run over since cameras came in. All they really prove is that there are fewer pedestrians – some, true enough have been thinned out (evolution in action!) others are huddled indoors having their food delivered, but many more have joined the grown-ups, got cars, and are even now learning how irksome it is to have Nanny second guessing them every time they go out for a spin.

And if moving weren't contentious enough, look what happens every time you stop. Loathsome plagues of traffic wardens, wheel clampers, tow-away operatives and other parasites lurk behind every bollard and lamppost, just waiting to bilk an innocent motorist of his or her salary. If only real criminals had convenient registration numbers tattooed on their foreheads! Look, I know none of us want to see the sort of violent summary justice that afflicts so many parts of the world but be honest – if you saw the body of a lynched wheel-clamper twisting in the breeze; after the initial revulsion had passed; are you quite sure a dirty dark part of you wouldn't think “damn good!”? And maybe give him a playful push? Surely not many traffic wardens would need to be necklaced before the others handed in their caps and went off to find more socially useful jobs? There are always new openings in crack marketing and prostitution, for example.

But stop, oh stop! There is a better way! How about if all the wardens, clampers, parking attendants etc. were to have their jobs subtly redefined? So that their role was to keep an eye on your car whilst you nipped into the shops? They could be making sure nobody pinches your stereo whilst you're in the hairdressers, and maybe squeegee the windscreen off for a small consideration whilst you have your lunch. And if you've had a few jars with it, they could help you find your keys, steady your balance as you roll yourself into the driver's seat, and tip you off as to where the Police breathalyser traps are, so you can weave home the other way and avoid all that inconvenience. Imagine; being a traffic warden would be something you could mention at parties. You might even get invited to some.

As for the cameras, well, they could be used to measure speed alright, but with a prize being awarded each month for whoever did the contraflow on the M1 past Luton the fastest! I do believe we may have the beginnings of a great political party here. It's not much yet, but we're at least two years from the next election so there's plenty of time to come up with policies about health, schools, Iraq and all that stuff. Drivers of England! Belt home, and prepare for government!

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