



A Bicycle Strategy for Canada?

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Toronto environmental lawyer Albert Koehl believes that Canada's Conservative government should embark on a national bicycle strategy.

"Our transportation system is a cycle of dependency. We get up Monday ready to devote a full day or more of the week to covering the cost of owning and operating a car, importing oil from people who don't even like us (it's not just Alberta — Ontario oil mostly comes from other foreign sources) and, at the end of the week, are left with a deteriorating climate that makes us more dependent on air conditioners to fight the heat, irrigation to fight the drought, and hip waders to fight the rising seas.

[Prime Minister Stephen] Harper could give a whole new meaning to the moniker "master of spin" by promoting the bicycle. His government, which currently spends virtually nothing on cycling (unless health-care costs to repair the broken bodies of cyclists are counted) could go zero-to-60 very quickly by funding a national bike strategy. Better yet, Mr. Harper would be able to show up Toronto Mayor David Miller, who reigns over a city bike plan that is still stuck closer to zero.

Mr. Harper, too, could be clever, in this case by breaking our cycle of car dependency without spending much taxpayer money. By promoting bicycles — the world's most energy efficient transportation vehicles — for Canadian cities, he would be recognized as a climate-change leader by millions of North Americans, instead of just by his communications staff.

Cyclists don't always obey traffic rules, it's true; in a world where we are told we must accept cars and their pollution as a reality, most of us cyclists are still going the wrong way. Mr. Harper has a chance to lead all of us in a wiser direction."

Full Story: [**The PM can help break the cycle of energy dependency – with bicycles**](#)

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