

## Roads vs PT

*"More plans for freeways yet public transport is bursting at the seams. As fuel prices rise and the [Victorian] Premier boasts about Melbourne's expanding population, the Government remains enslaved to the road lobby, flagging plans for new connecting freeways and road tunnels. Today's fuel prices will look low in 12 months and ridiculous in a decade. Road-users are already changing the way they use their cars but public transport investment requires long lead times and commitment to a rail tunnel is only one small step. Despite the Premier's 'action man' reputation, we're still waiting for decisive investment in public transport systems to help us reduce transport emissions and oil dependency, and maintain a liveable city."*

**Ref: Kelly O'Shanassy, The Age, 29/7/08**

*"A new road tunnel is not the best solution for Melbourne's growing population and the Government needs to focus on public transport, a world expert in urban planning warns. Cassio Taniguchi, secretary for the Department of Urban Development and Environment in Brasilia, said public transport was a cheaper, less polluting investment that would ultimately move more people. 'You must give priority to the mass transit system, to the public transportation system more than a road system, more than road networks', [said] Mr Taniguchi ... mayor of the Brazilian city of Curitiba from 1997 to 2004. Curitiba's rapid transit bus system now carries 70-75% of the 3 million people who live in and around the city. With a smartcard ticket system, buses are given priority everywhere and passengers pay a standard fare."*

**Ref: Kate Lahey, The Age, 29/7/08**

## Australia Talks PT

You have to love a country where you can hear intelligent radio at 3am even if one of the guests is so far off the mark that he makes everyone else seem perfectly reasonable:

*"With rising petrol prices and looming climate change, environmentalists pin their hopes on public transport. However, the government has included public transport in the emissions trading scheme. Cities such as Melbourne and Sydney are struggling to get an automatic ticketing system running. Many outer suburbs are cut off from public transport altogether. What improvements does public transport need in order to be workable in the future—or is it just a thing of the past?"* **Ref: Australia Talks, Radio National, 31/7/08** For the audio see:

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/australiatalks/stories/2008/2319364.htm> {If anyone transcribes this, let me know}.

## Industry Doing the Right Thing

*"Trucking giant Linfox has put in place a program to cut its greenhouse gas emissions 15% by 2010, with measures including asking drivers to slow down and greater use of solar energy in its warehouses. Linfox's group manager, environment and climate change, David McInnes, said the company accepted the evidence of transport's role in man-made climate change and was committed to action. ... He said more economical driving habits would create 4.8% in savings. Drivers were being urged to skip shifting gears, accelerate gradually, minimise air-conditioning, use cruise control, shift to neutral for short stops, avoid excessive idling, and to use the mass of the vehicle to maintain momentum. 'These are entirely achievable', he said.*

*"Better use of vehicles was another aim. Mr McInnes said Linfox aimed to cut down on the number of trucks that run with too much empty space. More efficient tyre use is also on the agenda. Linfox is installing a computer that will tell a driver if the truck's tyres are a little flat. ... One exciting innovation is the use of airbags between trailers to improve a truck's aerodynamic performance. 'We are doing tests in Germany. By closing the gap between the cabin and the trailers, and between trailers, you get a continuous airflow on all sides and thus use less energy', he said. ... 'Customers must agree on some of our actions, because they many need to change their behaviour', he said. Linfox plans a greater use of solar energy to run its warehouses. 'Those big roofs are just made for solar.'"*

**Ref: Philip Hopkins, The Age, 24/7/08**

## Trucking Industry Reform

*"The National Transport Commission (NTC) will investigate and report on driver remuneration and payment methods in the Australian trucking industry and make recommendations for reform. ... The report will examine how current methods and rates of pay for heavy vehicle drivers contribute to poor road safety outcomes, and will identify options for implementing a system of safe rates for both employees and owner-drivers, recognising the special vulnerabilities of independent contractors in the transport industry. From 2000-2004, one in five road deaths involved heavy vehicles, with speed and fatigue widely acknowledged to be significant factors. During recent years several reports have also linked unsafe work practices in the trucking industry to road accidents. The investigation follows on from an agreement between Commonwealth, state and territory transport ministers on February 29."* **Ref: Federal Government Media Release, 25/7/08**

## Maritime Trade

*“For Australia to be able to meet the challenges thrown our way by global economic demands, we need to maintain a dynamic and robust maritime industry. The Australian economy relies heavily on the maritime sector in international trade, especially in our primary production, manufacturing and resources sectors. We export goods by sea worth over \$142 billion and receive goods of over \$133 billion, or over 733 million tonnes in both directions. Domestically, we move over 56 million tonnes of cargo by ships. But if we are to ensure that Australia’s maritime industry and maritime tradition do not simply become footnotes in our history pages, then we need to act now. Last week, we became aware that yet another Australian licensed vessel, the Seakap, is to be withdrawn from service on the Australian Coast and replaced with another vessel that may be owned and managed overseas. ... The House of Representatives Portfolio Committee is conducting a wide-ranging inquiring into coastal shipping, to make recommendations to the government as to the best policy settings to enliven an Australian shipping industry. Regardless of the regulatory framework, the maritime industry needs to have the human capability to meet future demands.”*

**Ref: Extract from Federal Minister for Transport Anthony Albanese’s speech to the Australian Shipowners Association 21/7/08**



## Tax Concessions on Company Cars

*“The Committee for Melbourne will call on the Federal Government to scrap perverse subsidies such as tax concessions on company cars as part of its emissions trading scheme. ... Committee chief executive Sally Capp said she was concerned at comments made by Climate Change Minister Penny Wong that suggested the Government might continue to allow fringe benefits tax exemptions for company cars, which reward those drivers who clock up the kilometres.”*

**Ref: Mathew Murphy, The Age, 24/7/08**

## GHG and Transport

*“In response to recognition of the transport sector’s contribution to greenhouse emissions, Adele [McCarthy from the Public Transport Division of the Victorian Department of Infrastructure] has explored the potential for emission reduction from changing mode from private car to public transport. Adele calculated greenhouse intensity by mode which is greenhouse emissions per person kilometre; this demonstrates that public transport performs 30% better than cars at current occupancy rates. As well as the current greenhouse advantage of public transport, the analysis was extended to demonstrate the incremental emissions generated by growth in trips taking into account spare capacity on the public transport system and congestion effects from growth in car trips. It was shown that people who shift from car to public transport could substantially reduce emissions, 65% less emissions in peak period, 95% in off peak and 75% less emissions on average.*

*“Across the board this would mean that a 10% increase in public transport which equates to a 1% decrease in car use would save 70,000 tonnes of CO2 per year – or 1.5 billion black balloons. Likewise a single occupant car user who transferred to public transport for 100 km of travel per week would save 1,300 kg of CO2 a year or 26,000 black balloons. This analysis supports the Melbourne 2030 strategy of locating people near public transport. A comparison of greenhouse emissions due to transport from a number of metropolitan suburbs showed that households in outer suburbs with dispersed destinations and poor public transport were responsible for a greater amount of transport related greenhouse gases.”* **Ref: MTF Minutes 7/11/07**

## Forging Backwards

*“Ford has announced plans to accelerate its vast restructuring plan after the auto giant posted its worst quarterly loss in history. The carmaker has now lost nearly \$US24 billion (\$25bn) since 2006 ... This latest revision to Ford’s restructuring plan includes a small-car and fuel-efficiency offensive in reaction to what the carmaker considers a permanent shift away from petrol-guzzling pick-up trucks and large sport utility vehicles (SUVs). ... Investors punished Ford, pushing shares down 15.5 per cent...”*

**Ref: Mira Oberman, The Australian, 25/7/08**

## Eddington Submissions

Submissions to the Victorian Government East-West Needs Assessment (Eddington) can now be seen online at [www.transport.vic.gov.au](http://www.transport.vic.gov.au)

## Air Travel

*"Last year [2007] a record 47.2 million passengers flew almost 54 billion kilometres on Australian domestic airlines ..."*

### Federal Ministerial Media Statement, 1/8/08

*"The facts seem clear enough. Aeroplanes currently add around 750-million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year to the atmosphere's swelling burden. In the process they burn 250-million tonnes of a non-renewable resource, which by common consensus is fast approaching practical extinction. For every nine barrels of oil we consume, we discover one. At our present consumption rate we will use the same amount of oil in the next 25 years as has been used in the last 150. Any rational species would be measuring out this clearly limited resource with care. Especially it'd be using much of its vanishing gold to build a seriously sustainable infrastructure, with a wisely articulated social structure in parallel, against the day the wells shut down.*

*"Alas, we are not that rational species. Our black gold goes rather into a weekend in Bali, or a Very Important colloquium in Vienna, or even a flying visit to the new grandchild in Chicago. Isn't it worth pausing to think what options might be open to that grandchild half a century from now? He or she may not be so glad that we fiddled in flight while the oil burned. By its nature human flight is about as energy-inefficient a mode of travel as we have devised. As Ivan Illich noted years ago, the only form of locomotion on the planet more energy-hungry than a man in an aeroplane is a man in a helicopter. To lift the aeroplane as well as its human cargo 9 or 10 kilometres vertically above ground and hold them there, requires massive energy reserves before a single cross-country metre has been gained. And unfortunately, at that great height the emissions become potent. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change tells us the actual greenhouse effect of aircraft emissions at 30,000 feet is 2.7 times that suggested by their raw CO2 emission figure."*

**Ref: Richard Begbie, Ockham's Razor, 3/8/08**  
<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/ockhamsrazor/stories/2008/2/320462.htm#transcript>

## And Also ...

*"A small British airport has advertised for an air traffic controller - and offered those interested, an application pack in Braille. A spokesman for the local council said the wording was included on all job advertisements, while the Royal National Institute for the Blind praised its 'good practice'."* **Ref: The Age 13/7/08**

## China Crisis

*"Last week, Beijing ordered more than a million cars from the roads and closed dozens of the most heavily polluting factories, but the effort appears to have failed. ... One plan under consideration is to ban 90 per cent of all private vehicles from the streets of the capital during the [Olympic] Games ... There are now more than 22 million privately owned cars in China, with more than three million of them in Beijing, meaning 2.7 million would be forced from the roads under the crackdown. ... Seventy per cent of government cars and vehicles owned by state-run enterprises were also banned. Police and emergency services vehicles, as well*

*as public transport and taxis, were excluded. Beijing had earlier taken 300,000 heavily polluting vehicles off the road."*

**Ref: Rowan Callick, The Australian, 29/7/08**



**'Motorists? No problem now. All in jail.'**

*"New cars on Beijing's roads daily: 1000."*

*"Square metres of road that will be paved by 2025 [in China]: five billion."*

**Ref: Inquirer, The Australian, 2-3/8/08**

## Sanity Crisis

*"Environmental groups in Britain reacted angrily to reports today that an unnamed sheik from Qatar had his Lamborghini luxury sports car flown to London and back for an oil change. The Sun reported that the 10,450km round trip on Qatar Airways and the oil service would have cost around STG23,000 (\$A48,258.5). The Italian-built super-luxury model arrived in Britain last Friday and was flown back Monday, the paper said. 'This horrifies me', said Jenny Evans of environmental group Plane Stupid. It is another example of how rich people exploit and pollute the planet because of their money'. A spokesman for the green group Friends of the Earth said: The pollution from driving a Lamborghini is bad enough, but flying one thousands of miles for a service is taking climate-wrecking behaviour to new heights. But a spokeswoman for Lamborghini in Britain said: 'This sort of thing is not unheard of'."*

**Ref: Brisbane Times, 1/8/08**

## The Story of Highways (Pt 2)

**“Annabelle Quince:** *After World War II as car ownership increased in America, the US federal government began investing in freeways.*

**“Peter Norton:** *In 1956 Congress passed an Interstate Highway Act that transformed highway funding under that Act; States could get interstate highways funded 90% by the Federal government. Naturally they all wanted them in their States, it was like free super highways. And the prevailing idea among highway engineers was that these things should be built right into the hearts of cities. They sold this idea on the grounds that if you didn't do it, the hearts of cities would be bypassed and become irrelevant, and that you would actually help to keep central cities relevant by keeping major highways going into them.*

**“Thomas Zeller:** *Civil engineers under the auspices of the Interstate Highway Act were charged with building roads connecting all major cities and going right into the heart of those cities. So what they did when they planned the roads was to look for the least expensive land in those cities. And of course the least expensive pieces of property were those in neighbourhoods that were already depressed, the neighbourhoods where minorities lived, where African-Americans lived, or recent immigrants. So a lot of these roads were planned and began to be built in some of the poorest sections of major US cities. But what the civil engineers and many of the politicians did not expect, what happened was there was major resistance to these roads in a lot of those places, in New Orleans, in Baltimore, in San Francisco, in New York, almost any major city in the United States in the 1960s sees an episode of this freeway revolt. And local citizens, be it blacks, be it whites, be it other social groups, begin to challenge those engineers on their own grounds. And one poster that I remember from my research on Washington D.C., was very blunt, and it stated, 'No white man's roads through black man's backyards'. So there's a certain racial aspect to this freeway revolt as well. And given the local qualities of a lot of US political culture, many of these roads were indeed stopped. So right here in Washington, D.C., you have several roads 4-lane interstate highways that go into the city and then all of a sudden simply stop, and then if you drive on these roads, you have to continue on local roads. And that is because local citizens in the '60s or the '70s stopped these roads in their tracks, and then construction did not continue.*

**“Peter Norton:** *I have often heard the American interstate highway system called the biggest public works project in the history of the world. It's 42,000 miles, although about 1,000 miles of the original project was not finished; those were urban interstates. So it was really gargantuan, but I think it's impossible to measure because the question arises, Well what do you measure? Do you also measure the enormous destruction of property to accommodate parking for these cars? In cities today if we drive a car into a big city, I think we generally look for a parking garage, but in the early years there were almost no parking garages. And in America, one way to cash in quick when the interstate highways came if you were renting say, low-rent apartments or shops, was to demolish them and just park cars on them. And aerial photography of American cities shows the growth of these open-air parking lots just spreading everywhere in American cities like a cancer.*

**“Annabelle Quince:** *It was this American model of the freeway that began to spread around the globe.*

**“Peter Norton:** *The American model does start to spread in part because Europeans and even Australians start to bring in American highway engineering firms in the '50s. I was just reading this morning about Wilbur Smith, an American transportation engineer, who had one of the biggest firms in the world, came to Brisbane in 1965 and started building American-style highways right into the middle of Brisbane. According to the sources I read that model was then imitated, using American highway engineers in the other major cities of Australia.”*

{Continued next issue}

**Ref: ABC Radio National program Rear Vision: 'The Story of Highways' produced and presented by Annabelle Quince, 20/7/08 See: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/rearvision/stories/2008/2281165.htm>**



**The Judge Harry Pregerson Interchange  
Los Angeles, California  
Picture: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freeway>**