

When Queen Elizabeth opened the new City Hall in London last year, some observers compared the building, designed by the architect Norman Foster, to a giant eye. And that is exactly what it looks like -- a glassy postmodern eyeball on the south bank of the Thames, staring across the river at its staid Georgian and Victorian neighbors as if to say, "Welcome to the 21st century." Atop the building is a semicircular penthouse called London's Living Room, walled with windows that offer a commanding view of the city below. The idea behind this room is to offer a place for Londoners to gather, if only through the medium of a television camera, for the kinds of serious, big-family sit-downs that go along with governing a sometimes dysfunctional city of more than seven million -- a city so decentralized, in fact, that until three years ago it never had an elected mayor.

On an unusually bright morning earlier this year, that mayor, Ken Livingstone, strides into the room before a bank of cameras, and with an unusually pleased look on his dour face, announces a coup, one that has eluded dozens of large cities like New York, Los Angeles and Paris. He has not conquered crime or poverty, but he may very well have hobbled an urban enemy seemingly just as invincible -- the car. Livingstone has just begun the world's most radical experiment in reclaiming the city from the tyranny of the automobile, a power struggle that cities have been losing in humiliating fashion for more than half a century. Since well before his election, he has been warning Londoners that far too many of them (about 250,000 a day) are trying to drive into far too small a place -- central London -- polluting the air, choking commerce, slowly strangling their own livelihood. To stop them, the mayor decided to draw a line, literally.

The line formed a lopsided oval around eight square miles of the historic inner city. Almost anyone who drove across the line during business hours -- in fact, almost anyone who moved or even parked a car on the street within it after Feb. 17 -- instantly owed the city of London \$5 (about \$8) a day for every day it happened. If a driver failed to pay, one of more than 700 vulturelike video cameras perched throughout the zone would capture his license plate number and relay it to a computer, leading to a huge fine. And if the driver declined to pay those fines? The mayor vowed, only half-jokingly, that the city would relentlessly track his car down, clamp it, tow it away and crush it -- "with or without the driver inside." Few would be exempt, not even volunteer social workers, teachers, foreign diplomats or undercover police officers.

The idea behind his assault on automotive freedom was neither new nor very hard to understand. If a finite resource is free, human beings tend to use it all up, regardless of the consequences. If it has a cost, they tend to use it more rationally. Livingstone, a far-left Socialist, won his mayoralty largely on the promise of applying this tough-love theory to London's streets. But in the weeks just before the "congestion charge" began, it sometimes seemed that he was the only one who believed it would work. The newspapers were full of derisive nicknames for it, like "Ken-gestion" and "Carmaggedon." Samantha Bond, the actress who plays Miss Moneybags in the most recent James Bond movies, became the sympathetic face of the opposition, presiding over a protest with hints of civil disobedience at the West End theater where -- somehow fittingly -- "Les Misérables" was being staged. Tony Blair's government, which had given London and other British cities permission to levy such traffic charges in the first place, carefully distanced itself from the plan. And the bookmaking firm William Hill, one of London's most able arbiters of public sentiment, began offering 4-to-1 odds that it would fail by the end of the year. (The odds that Livingstone would be out of office before the end of his term were put at 10 to 1.)

T On this sunny Tuesday morning, however, it appears that the mayor has beaten at least the first of those odds. The number of cars entering the cordon zone the day before, the first day of the charge, dropped by about 60,000, remarkable even in the context of a school holiday. One automobile group estimated that average speeds in central London had doubled, nothing less than a miracle in the world of road policy. Livingstone, addressing his public in a droopy suit, bright blue tie and a pair of sensible thick-soled walking shoes, declares it "the best day we've had in traffic flow in living memory" and reports that he has even taken a call from the government's transport minister, John Spellar, a Labor Party archenemy who had helped to expel Livingstone from the party three years earlier when he launched his renegade mayoral bid.

Livingstone's eyes twinkle as he relates the conversation. "He said, 'Clearly the devil looks after his own,' and we had a good laugh," the mayor says.

When a reporter asks whether the mayor has truly considered the consequences of the scheme failing, especially with his re-election campaign only a year away, Livingstone's nasal Cockney voice, already as affectless as a door buzzer, drops to a full deadpan. "I never consider my own future when making political decisions," he says. He pauses for effect. "How can you be so cynical?"

As television crews troop out to the balcony to shoot the light traffic wheeling around the Tower of London, a good laugh is had all around the living room.

he exchange, however, goes straight to the heart of cities' tangled history with the automobile -- undoubtedly the most inefficient, and most aggressively defended, means ever conceived for transporting large numbers of people through crowded places. The idea of using a price tag to regulate driving into crowded places has been around for years, but its progress has been slowed by two problems, one big, the other gigantic. The first was simply technical: how would you charge for entry into entire cities or neighborhoods without putting tollbooths everywhere and causing more congestion? That obstacle has now been largely overcome with high-speed electronic tolls, sharpshooter cameras (originally developed for antiterrorism purposes in London) and even the development of satellite tracking of cars.

The gigantic problem is political. Since at least the end of World War II, the battle between cars and cities, a battle over the shape of the city itself, has been an epic mismatch. An oversimplified chronology would read something like this: the car helps to create sprawl, sprawl siphons people and political power away from the hearts of cities, the car returns to attack the city, which was never designed to accommodate so many, the city is forced to transform itself, ceding sidewalks to streets, trolley tracks to traffic lanes, parks to parking lots, whole neighborhoods to expressways.

In the United States, the critic Lewis Mumford foresaw a grim end to the whole process: "a tomb of concrete roads and ramps covering the dead corpse of a city." While the effects have not been quite that dire yet, the imbalance remains tremendous. On a purely human level, it can be witnessed any weekday in Times Square, where armies of angry pedestrians crowd around SUV's pinioned in crosswalks, the drivers inside easily outnumbered 100 to 1.

But those drivers and the people who profit from them in cities -- principally garage owners, automobile clubs and road builders -- have had tremendous political influence over the years. They have portrayed unfettered access to public tax-supported roads as something like a modern amendment to the rights of man. And while it may be in the long-term interests of drivers to pay for using some roads in order to make them passable again, to put that money into subsidizing more efficient conveyances like trains and buses, city leaders have long viewed administering that corrective as something close to electoral suicide. Even the most crusading anti-car mayors -- like

John V Lindsay in New York, who came within weeks of ordering a Midtown traffic ban in the early 1970's, and Edward I Koch after him, who came almost as close to imposing tolls on the free East River bridges -- have ultimately backed down or lost their battles

Though it might seem like a relatively new phenomenon, saturation traffic has existed in many cities for decades, virtually unchanged. Depending on whom you believe, it is incredibly destructive, costing London alone over \$300 million a year in lost productivity and revenue just because of congestion in the tiny central portion of the city (One New York City study in the late 1990's found that traffic problems in Manhattan cost the city as much as \$4 billion a year in lost productivity)

With its mazelike medieval streets, London was a city plagued with congestion long before the car. In his diaries, Samuel Pepys twice recorded being stuck in 17th-century horse-and-buggy jams. When the car came along, the original notion was that such age-old transportation problems could be solved if enough new roads were built to handle cities' needs, a strategy called "predict and provide." But by the 1960's, only a half-century after the car came into common use, economists and traffic planners were starting to notice that new roads seemed only to create more traffic.

By 1977, when the British punk band the Jam recorded "London Traffic" ("No one knows the answer/No one seems to care/Take a look at our city/Take the traffic elsewhere"), the average speed of a car in central London was 12 miles an hour, or a little faster than the top running speed of a domestic pig. At the turn of the millennium, more than two decades later, many Londoners could only look back on those congested years with nostalgia. The average speed had dropped to less than nine miles per hour for the first time in modern record-keeping, meaning that car travel through Britain's capital was generally as slow as by coach a century ago.

"We're addicted, really," Bev Ramsden, a veteran taxi driver and dispatcher, told me one wet weekday morning, inching down the A4 highway through the gray margins of Hammersmith, nowhere near the most congested part of the city. "Like addicts, I think we're getting to the point where we're realizing how crazy this is. Someone's got to do something."

It will probably go down as one of the stranger chapters in the history of traffic policy that the man who finally did something is a former lefty radical (once known as Red Ken) applying conservative free-market ideas. In a way, of course, it all makes complete sense: the congestion charge is classic Robin Hood socialism, taking from the comfortable Londoner commuting by Bentley and giving to the commoner hanging from the strap of a packed double-decker bus. But don't misunderstand. While he is a crusader, Livingstone is also a famously foot-sure career politician as interested as any in re-election. Despite his quip for the television cameras, he did not launch his assault without making a lot of practical calculations about its effect on his future. That morning, in fact, waiting downstairs for him in a cavernous boardroom was a group of strategists who were highly paid to do just that. It was telling that most of these strategists were not from London at all but from a place with much worse traffic problems and a much more treacherous political climate for trying to solve them: New York City (Average traffic speed: about seven miles per hour, no faster than a running possum.)

Only a few months after his election in the summer of 2000, Livingstone began courting Robert R. Kiley, a former CIA official, business leader and transit expert, who as head of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in New York in the 1980's was credited with resurrecting the city's graffiti-scarred subway system, now considered one of the best in the world. Kiley, given the new title of London's transport commissioner, brought with him another former top New York transit official, Jay Walder, who had become an expert on road pricing at Harvard and

in Singapore, where a smaller but much more costly congestion-charging system in place for more than 25 years has cut car ownership to 1 in 10 city residents

When Kiley arrived in London, most of the attention focused on his transit credentials and how he would use them to rescue the ailing London Underground, an effort in which he and Livingstone, fighting Blair's government, have been largely unsuccessful. But Kiley told me later that he was equally interested in coming to London because of Livingstone's determination to try to right the relationship between the city and the car. If it worked, Kiley knew, it would be seen as a model around the world, and especially back in New York, where more than 250,000 vehicles crowd into the 8.5-square-mile heart of Manhattan in three hours every morning, roughly the same number that enter the eight square miles of central London over the course of an entire workday.

As the leader of a business alliance in the 1990's, Kiley advocated road pricing for Manhattan, but he received no support from Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, whose voting base in Queens and Staten Island practically lived in their cars. In many ways London was an interesting parallel, more like New York than any other American city in its atypical transportation landscape. In both cities, as packed as the roads can be, more than 80 percent of workers take some form of mass transit into the central city every weekday morning. In London, as in New York, some drivers are poor. But most tend to have money -- enough to generate political pressure to protect their choice. They are also affluent enough, Kiley points out, to be persuaded to spend a little money to save them something much more valuable: their time.

"We knew all along that the motorist advocates and writers for the newspapers and libertarians and people who are really locked into cars would be critical, but I think the majority of Londoners supported congestion-charging right up to opening day," Kiley said later in his office, with a poster of the Brooklyn Bridge behind his desk. "Would I call it a popular measure? Probably not. But I think that Londoners have long since concluded that someone had to take this dragon on."

Sitting there that day, as the dragon was being cowed on the streets below, Kiley told me that he had spoken at length about fighting it with another very important potential St. George, one in some ways a lot like Livingstone -- a political outsider who takes the subway to work, who strongly supports the idea of road pricing and who views the prerogatives of driving from a much more jaundiced 21st-century perspective. His name was Michael R. Bloomberg, and he was the mayor of New York City.

Though not mentioned in "The Power Broker," Robert A. Caro's biography of the master road builder Robert Moses, one of the more iconic clashes in the long war between the car and the city took place in New York, with Moses playing a role. He and other planners wanted to slice a highway through the middle of Washington Square Park, the heart of Greenwich Village. It is now hard to believe such a plan was ever seriously proposed, but in 1958 it came close to happening.

At the time, photographed defiantly on the City Hall steps with a giant prop key to lock traffic out of the park, a Tammany Hall leader framed a question that was only then starting to be asked in earnest. Would we, he asked, "plan and develop our cities in accordance with the needs and wishes of the people who live in them or for the convenience of the vehicles which pass through them?" The highway through the park was eventually scrapped, but in New York that question, until very recently, has been answered almost always in favor of the passing cars. From 1924 to 1965, car lanes into Manhattan grew from 68 to 120, according to one count, while the number of cars on the street went from 390,000 a day in 1946 (considered intolerable at the time) to more than a million by the end of the 1990's. And that is not because travel has been made more efficient. In fact, it has often been the opposite. In 1907, with trolleys and traffic lanes, the

Brooklyn Bridge carried 426,000 people a day, now, with space only for cars, it carries far less than half that number and is often jammed. Convoys of trucks rumble down the decaying streets of Chinatown on their way to New Jersey because tolls on the Verrazano Narrows Bridge would cost them an average of \$33 per trip to take the highways that are better designed for them.

Many traffic experts see Bloomberg as the last, best chance -- at least for the foreseeable future -- for anything to change. When he was campaigning, he sought the advice of car skeptics like Kiley Samuel I. Schwartz, an engineer who worked on East River bridge tolls under both Lindsay and Koch, wrote much of Bloomberg's stridently anti-car campaign platform himself. And Schwartz, who coined the quintessential New York warning "Don't Even THINK of Parking Here," is no moderate on the issue. He advocates charging trucks \$50 for using Manhattan as a pass-through and, were it technically possible, \$25 a minute for people who want to cruise Fifth Avenue during the height of the holiday season. ("They want to see the Rock Center Christmas tree from their car?" he says. "If they do, they should pay for that great privilege.")

After his election, Bloomberg seemed to be moving in that direction. He decided, in the face of mounting attacks by powerful garage owners, to maintain most of an emergency traffic ban that Giuliani started after the Sept. 11 attacks, preventing single-occupant cars from crossing into much of Manhattan during the morning rush. He has ended the age-old tradition of free Sunday parking in many neighborhoods (including his own, the Upper East Side) and banned turns on some busy crosstown streets -- small changes but ones met with shrieks of protest. His transportation commissioner, Iris Weinshall, even went to London last summer to talk to Kiley and Livingstone about the congestion charge.

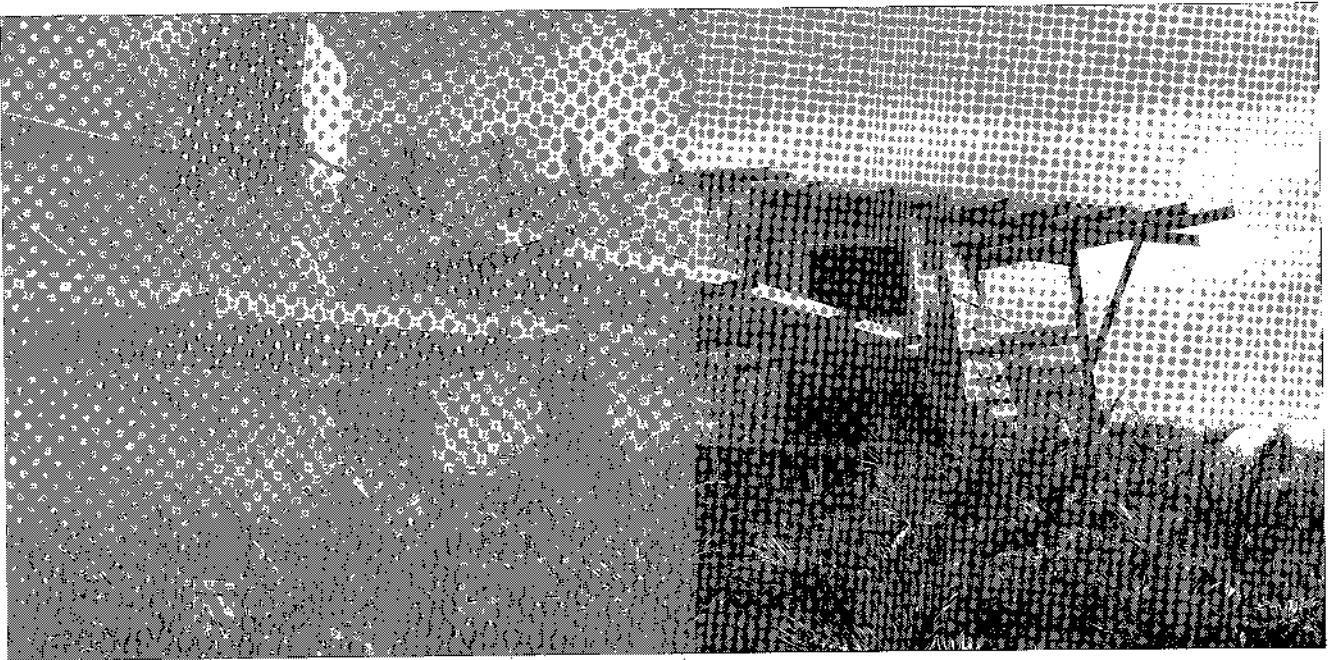
But there seems to be a growing sense that Bloomberg could end up among the near-miss mayors on any kind of serious traffic reform. In large part, this is because he has already spent a career's worth of political capital by raising property taxes to fix the city's enormous budget gap, for example, and by banning smoking in bars, a move that would probably get Livingstone sacked in London. Bloomberg and his staff are so nervous about traffic issues that they do not like to talk about them even privately anymore. One city official told me of his particular nightmare: trying to write the speech that Bloomberg would deliver when he cut the ribbons on the new Brooklyn Bridge toll plaza. "What's he going to say? 'Ladies and gentlemen, these things that've been free for decades and decades. I'm the guy who's going to make you pay for them! Thank you for your support!'"

Kiley says he still believes that Bloomberg could sell a congestion charge, especially in a city where so many take mass transit and only half of the people living at the epicenter of the problem even own cars. "That's not a bad place to start," he says, "when you know that half the people in Manhattan are going to be with you, almost by definition."

For all the rest, he adds, "Bloomberg could use the analogy of, well, look what a difference government has actually made to the subway system. Now we've got to take the next step because we have a subway that's working better, a commuter rail system that's in good shape and lots of room on buses. We've got to really start managing road use. That could be his message."

Would the message work? New York might not be ready to hear it yet, and the messenger might be killed. But inevitably the city will have to listen, and the brave politician who forces it to come to its senses will be heralded as a visionary. "Fifth Avenue" has always had a dull ring to it. What about "Bloomberg Promenade"?

Randy Kennedy, a reporter for the Metro Section of The Times, writes the Tunnel Vision column about the New York subway system.



PUKE ARIKI: The imaginative museum and library complex for New Plymouth designed by architectural firm Boon Goldsmith Bhaskar and built by Clelands Construction

Taranaki scores national first

Hugh Stringleman
Regional development

When the Puke Ariki library and museum complex on New Plymouth's waterfront opens in June, it will showcase the unique qualities and economic well-being of Taranaki.

The \$25 million centre – the first of its type in New Zealand – has been financed by New Plymouth District Council, foundation partners and corporate sponsors in a model public-private partnership.

It is remarkable architecturally, symbolising the region's strong Maori history and containing taonga along with interactive displays. It will be opened by Prime Minister Helen Clark on June 14.

The marriage of museum and library was itself unique in New Zealand, manager Suzanne Porter said.

It mirrors the co-operation between civic authorities and business that characterises Taranaki, resulting in many fine public facilities such as TSB Stadium, Bowl of Brooklands, Pukekura Park, the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, the seaside walkway and its Len Lye wind wand.

Out on a regional limb, and dependent on a small number of industries, Taranaki had one of the highest rates of regional growth in 2002 (about 1% higher than the national rate) and as the year ended, was the leading region for business confidence.

But, the looming threat of Maui gasfield shutdown, and a massive flow-on effect to methanol producer Methanex and Westgate Port Taranaki, has concentrated the minds and the promotional efforts of the region's administrators.

Nothing could be more different from undersea hydrocarbon extraction than filmmaking against Mt Taranaki's backdrop.

Sets for *The Last Samurai* have been built, used and pulled down all around the province, including the cricket clubrooms at

Pukekura Park transformed into an emperor's pavilion and a Westgate harbour reclamation temporary home to a Japanese fishing village.

Fanciful locals might have wanted those facades kept as tourist attractions but the business brains of New Plymouth know that economic progress is built on something altogether more substantial.

On the same harbour reclamation Fitzroy Yachts has a massive shed, inside of which three big super yachts are taking shape.

During the Asian crisis downturn for his Fitzroy heavy engineering company, owner Peter White-Robinson diversified into building superyachts.

"We have the skill base here to do it and the labour requirement is 150,000 hours per yacht," he explained.

Each completed yacht is worth \$15-20 million to the company, half in materials and subcontractors, the rest in labour.

After Mr White-Robinson built the first yacht on spec, subsequent yachts have all been built to order.

Now both Fitzroy ventures are working to capacity, with the heavy engineering plant making massive vessels for the Gladstone aluminium smelter in Queensland, among other things.

Total employment in heavy engineering and yachts is 500 people, with a weekly wages input to New Plymouth of more than \$500,000.

Started during the halcyon days of Think Big and oil exploration, this engineering capability now forms the base of Fitzroy's bid for the Defence Ministry's \$500 million Project Protector shipbuilding contract, as a joint venture with Vosper Thornycroft of the UK.

The Last Samurai's fishing village will give way to Westgate's new \$10 million slipway when, and not if, according to local leaders, Fitzroy wins the big contract.

But while Taranaki may be gambling with big stakes on its future in filmmaking and shipbuilding, the province's wealth remains grounded on what grows on the surface or is found in layers far under the ground.

Taranaki is fortunate to have the farming and energy sectors underpinning its regional economy but it needs to widen the scope of business activities, and tourism.

Recent good rates of economic activity owe much to the \$5/kg milk solids payout in two previous seasons and to the rising New Zealand dollar effects on local oil and gas supplies.

An unprecedented drought this summer, coupled with a payout fall to \$3.60, will knock the region hard.

If the Maui gasfield supply should implode, as many fear, then Methanex would be mothballed and a giant regional earnings stream would be turned off.

Future drilling depends on the pricing structures of gas and the central government's attitude toward exploration, says John Young, chairman of regional development agency Venture Taranaki.

The region is the most advanced nationally in broadband coverage using DSL, which Venture Taranaki has hailed as the gateway for entrepreneurs to the world of commerce.

John Rae, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, is proud of a list of local successes turned into national businesses, including Pete's Post, the Mill Liquorsave and the \$2 shops.

New Plymouth also hosted the Young Enterprise Olympics last year, an ongoing scheme which involves students from 11 local schools.

But it will take a huge number of small entrepreneurs to fill the gap left if Methanex shuts up shop.



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11 March 2003

Bob Harvey Mayor of Waitakere Council
c/o Waitakere City Council
Waitakere City

Dear Bob

I am writing to express my concern at the increased frequency of undesirable behavior directly outside our shop. In the past 6 months it is escalated to a point where many of our clients do not feel safe within this particular area as do we. This being the case we have reduced our shop hours to coincide with the other Westfield shops outside.

I have taken this matter to our Head Office who have been in touch with Westfield and we have all been trying to improve this area, but as this is council property there is only much that Westfield Security can do. On many occasions we have had to alert the police but the response has been very slow and often non-existent.

As a retail operation we are waiting for a commitment from the local council to support Henderson retailers while there has been recent publicity there does appear to be half hearted commitment from Council. We look forward to an improvement in the Henderson area.

Yours sincerely



Tracy Nathan
MANAGER



INSTANT FINANCE

partnership

17th March 2003

Mr Bob Harvey
C/o Ross Harvey
164 Upland Road
Remuera
Auckland

Dear Sir

I am writing to you to express my growing concerns over trading in Henderson

I am Regional Manager for Instant Finance NZ Ltd (West Auckland) I have a retail outlet situated on the corner of Railside Avenue and Great North Road which has been trading for just under two years

Over the years I, my staff and customers have noticed a steady increase in what the local populace is describing as "street kids" in the immediate area. These children, or in some cases young adults are everywhere. They accost people on the streets for money, enter into my premises drunk, on drugs and abusive and are generally making the lives of my staff and customers hell.

Many people are afraid. Some are fearful of the Mall entrances (where the youths tend to congregate) others, including my staff of returning to their cars after close of business.

We do not live in a perfect world Mr Harvey, but Henderson has never had an atmosphere like it has today. The abusive language alone must be breaking some kind of By-Law and left unchecked this situation can only end in violence and/or tragedy.

As a business and private tax-payer I write to you honestly thinking you may not be aware of how the situation has worsened recently. Our ever-extended Police force seem relatively impotent unless a major crime has been committed. Is there a case for a private Security firm to be employed with our money so we can trade in peace and security?

I await your reply

Yours Sincerely

Adrian Hatt (Regional Manager West Auckland)

mg

Here if you need us

14 March 2003

To Whom It May Concern

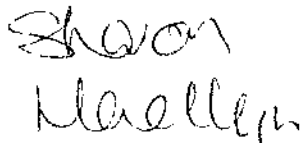
I would like to put in writing my displeasure at the amount of unruly teenagers that seem to congregate around the premises in which I work

To come in and find vomit at the bottom of the stairs is quite unacceptable in my view Having them sit in our doorway when clients are coming in and out and not being cooperative when asked to move, I feel could reflect on business Older clients would feel quite intimidated by this sort of behaviour

If something could be done by way of more police presence to ease this situation, it would be most appreciated particularly on Fridays and Weekends

Yours sincerely

Harveys Corporation Limited MREINZ

Handwritten signature of Sharon Llewellyn in cursive script.

Sharon Llewellyn
Sales Manager



342 Great North Road
Henderson, Auckland
New Zealand
Ph/Fax: 09-836-4491

08 March 2003

Mr. Bob Harvey
Mayor of Waitakere City

Dear Sir,

RE: Concerns about Henderson's Main Street

We really appreciate your contributions to Waitakere City in all the years when you were our mayor

Today, we would like to raise some concerns about recent happenings in the main street. Youngsters, be it school drop-outs or playing trunts, have been hanging out on the street causing trouble and damaging property. There were times when they came into the shop to steal, harrassed us or even the customers. Once, a drunkard came into the shop to create trouble. We even had a little girl, probably about 3 yrs old, trying to steal. Graffiti is all over the place. Fights occur outside the shop.

We, including our customers are now feeling unsecured coming to this place. We believe the Council would not want all the businesses on this street to close down because of these. We also have

11 03 2003
Henderson
Waitakere City

From Adriatico Restaurant
354 Great North Rd - Henderson

To The Mayor of Waitakere City

Re Problems with street kids/gangs on Henderson's main street

Dear Sir,

We were asked recently, yet again, to write a letter outlining the problems we experience with street kids and gangs in front of our restaurant. As much as I welcome this opportunity, it is very difficult for me to write this letter with any degree of optimism, much less a conviction, that finally something will be done to solve these problems. During the eleven years we have owned Adriatico Restaurant we have attended meetings, written letters, talked to councilors, talked to Police, talked to would be councilors, been approached by Maori wardens who explained to us how disadvantaged and how actually nice these kids are etc etc. Nothing has ever come out of it. What contributes greatly towards our sense of disappointment and resignation is the attitude one seems to feel coming out from the Council and Police that these problems are somehow everybody else's but theirs. And the problems are many. On occasions too numerous to remember we have been victims of personal abuse of the worst kind, break-ins, car theft, attempted car thefts, graffiti, insults etc. Many of our clients have been asked for money while coming to or leaving our restaurant, abused after refusing and some even spat on. Sometimes these thugs even dare to come into the restaurant and ask for money or just scream at everybody from the top of their lungs to f off. We have lost many regular clients during the years. We are doing everything to please our clients and to lose them because of this is very frustrating and nerve wracking. Yet we can't do anything about it and those who can don't seem to even want to know about it.

It is the same group of hooligans that is causing most of the problems. As shopkeepers we have daily opportunities to observe them at their work (selling drugs, drinking etc) and have come to know and recognize them. Some even nod to us before abusing us later. Fueled by alcohol, drugs, presence of girls and gang members to whom they look up, these boys (mainly teenagers) go around creating havoc, ruining our business and livelihood and endangering our personal very existence. I have been personally provoked and abused many times. Once even attacked. The police did not bother to come. Outnumbered and outmuscled one can do nothing else but swallow his pride and dignity and run for his life. Sometimes we do it just to remain on the right side of the law. But it is very difficult. Once, after a Police intervention I said to the policeman "There are times

when I wish I had a baseball bat" I don't blame you mate" he said, " you really have it rough here" The Police call centre (111) can vouch how many times we have called them because of a fight on the street or because we are being physically threatened Any of our employees can confirm how many times I have asked them to drop everything they are doing and leave it for tomorrow so we can lock up and go home immediately after the last customer leaves because of a safety concern It just goes on and on I could write for days There was the time, some years ago and before these problems occurred, when at a meeting of the Henderson Business Association we were discussing plans how to smarten up the main street and make it more presentable and family friendly Due to disastrous planning we have long given up on that dream Our concerns are of much simpler nature now They are concerns about our physical well being and survival, not as a business but as people wanting to go home to their families at the end of the night in one piece

Dear Sir, if you, while reading this letter, sense my anger and frustration, I can tell you that it is ever present, especially at times when I have to remind myself of things like these And if you find it to be grim reading, I can assure you that the reality is much, much worse A careful reader might even sense the fear

It is only natural for me to have my hopes raised and my disappointment subdued again, for it just might be this very letter of all that will awaken the authority in you and force you to do something It just might

And if it doesn't, well, there isn't much more to be lost anyway We have become used to inaction long ago

Kind regards,

Dimitar Kardula
Owner, Adriatico Restaurant



The Travel Professionals

360 Great North Road
PO Box 21-106 Henderson
Auckland New Zealand
DX DP92545
Telephone (09) 838 6295
Facsimile (09) 836 1109
Email henderson@harveyworld.co.nz

To the 'Mayor of Waitakere City'
Mr Bob Harvey

10 March 2003

Dear Mr Harvey ,

I am writing to you to voice my absolute frustration with a situation that we (and other shops in the area) have to put up with on a daily basis

We constantly have to put up with groups of youths congregating on our corner Fighting, urinating around our doorway, drinking alcohol, abuse of others walking by, preventing customers from entering our shop, graffiti and etching names into our glass windows are all common occurrences

We are trying to draw more people into the area but the scene is not a welcoming one I have to ask people all the time, to please move from out of our doorway, but I am always very careful as we then get confronted with verbal abuse or they just laugh and don't move Before and after work, both myself and my staff, have to take the walk to the car park and pass by these same people who really are an intimidating bunch We should not have to feel scared coming to work but it has really got to that stage Then we never know if we will find our car's intact when we reach the car-park

How am I supposed to try and attract new staff into the area to grow our business when we have to content with all of this nonsense Several shops near us have closed up and left the area as the problem has just become a joke and others are making noises about leaving as well if things do not change

It would be very sad if we let this part of Great North Road become deserted of all respectable businesses but that does look to be a likely scenario if nothing is done in the near future

I ask that you bring this matter to your attention and help us to make Henderson a nice shopping area for both customers and workers alike

Kind regards

Kim Roe
Manager - Harvey World Travel (Henderson)

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10th March 2003

Bob Harvey
MAYOR – Waitakere City Council,
WAITAKERE CITY

c c Ross Harvey

RE. SECURITY & STREET VANDALISM IN THE HENDERSON C.B.D.

Mr Harvey,

It is with some regret that I write this letter, requesting that the Waitakere City Council have a look at the pedestrian traffic, vandalism, and the loitering problems, that we currently experience in the Great North Road/Catherine Street areas in Henderson

Some time ago, approximately 6-8 months ago, it was decided that the Community Constable was no longer needed in the main road, and the space that had been given to the Henderson Police to use as a Community Constable area, was closed. Since this time, we have found that there is a larger number of people loitering in the entrance to the Westfield Mall and the Catherine Street area. It is noted also, that some time ago, the game parlours were shut down, however this has purely moved the problem into a the main traffic thoroughfare. Each morning, we are currently paying our cleaners and painters to go and remove graffiti and clean up the excrement along the main road and the entrance to the Westfield Mall. We have also taken measures to put a fence up (with razor wire) on the entrance to Catherine Street, to avoid the damage to our vehicles and to stop the youth's who are using this as an escape from Westfield Mall.

We would appreciate your help in getting the Waitakere District Police to put some of their resources into permanently maintaining a presence in this area. It is also noted that some time ago, the camera that was mounted above the Westpac Building was ceased to be operative, due to the cabling being disconnected. This has been disconnected for 3 years, and we note that it has not been reconnected. We have also made an offer to the local police to supply them with some ground – namely the area where the fencing is, right beside the Peacock Building and Westfield Mall, to use as a Police command centre, or as a

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temporary office Considering that we have just had a 33% rate increase on our buildings, namely the Catherine Street building has gone from \$31000 to \$42000 per year in rates - we are also paying \$23000 per year for the 357 Arcade I would expect as a tax payer to be provided more, than what I am getting We firstly all pay for our rubbish to be removed, we pay for graffiti to be fixed, we pay for our own street lighting to be maintained, we pay for the electricity for that street lighting It would be nice if we could have a contribution from the Council as it would appear, at this stage, to be one-sided We are happy to provide our own security, as long as this was rebated from our rates We presume this would be one of the reasons why the Westfield Shopping Centre had their rates reduced significantly at the commencement of their project Maybe it's because they pay for their own security

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Thomson', written in a cursive style.

DEAN THOMSON

M15

LIGHTING UP HENDERSON

A request to Henderson Businesses



HERE'S THE PROBLEM!

Good businesses and the Henderson business area are suffering because:

- Large sections of veranda and shop lights are not turned on at night in the Henderson business area.
- Dark areas encourage criminal activity and 'unsavoury' behaviour.
- The Police report frustration at having to constantly attend to incidents that could easily be deterred if the area was better lit, (efficient lighting is a deterrent to criminal behaviour)
- Businesses are fed up with constant break-ins, damage and burglaries
- Dark areas encourage graffiti - and graffiti removal costs the ratepayers
- Landlords complain about increasing insurance costs and damage to buildings
- Buildings become downgraded and in turn don't attract quality, sustainable business tenants.

All of these issues make Henderson attractive for criminals and discourage customers from using the exotic array of restaurants at night. They give the perception that Henderson is unsafe and **not** the place to go at night.

Less customers have a direct impact on the local economy, businesses struggle, and quality tenants don't choose to locate

SO WHAT ARE WE DOING

The Henderson Business Association is working on a program during 1999 to encourage business and landowners to improve the vibrancy and appeal of Henderson retail area. A number of initiatives are underway to attract customers to make Henderson their first shopping choice.

Business owners, Henderson needs your help, please could you check your premise, or work with your landlord, to assess the following:

- **Are the veranda lights working and turned on at night?**
- **If you don't have lights, would under, or above, veranda spot-lights be an advantage to the business?**
- **Is there adequate spot lighting at the rear of the building? (To light doorways, alleys and parking areas)?**
- **Are windows lit and attractive? (a safe street will attract evening browsers)**
- **If no external lights are on at night is an internal light left on?**
- **If the building has neon signs are they in good working order?**



THIS MATTER REQUIRES URGENT ATTENTION

Your assistance would be appreciated. A similar letter has also been sent to the landlord.

"A bully can be stopped So can a mob"

Tim Robbins lashes back at the lynch mob calling for his head and those of other peace activists

Editor's note: Actor Tim Robbins delivered the following speech to the National Press Corps in Washington on Tuesday



April 16, 2003 | I had originally been asked here to talk about the war and our current political situation but I have instead chosen to hijack this opportunity and talk about baseball and show business Just kidding Sort of

I can't tell you how moved I have been at the overwhelming support I have received from newspapers throughout the country these past few days I hold no illusions that all of these journalists agree with me on my views against the war While the journalists' outrage at the cancellation of our appearance in Cooperstown is not about my views, it is about my right to express these views I am extremely grateful that there are those of you out there still with a fierce belief in constitutionally guaranteed rights We need you the press, now more than ever This is a crucial moment for all of us

For all the ugliness and tragedy of 9/11 there was a brief period afterwards where I held a great hope In the midst of the tears and shocked faces of New Yorkers, in the midst of the lethal air we breathed as we worked at ground zero, in the midst of my children's terror at being so close to this crime against humanity, in the midst of all of this I held onto a glimmer of hope in the naive assumption that something good could come out of all this I imagined our leaders seizing upon this moment of unity in America, this moment when no one wanted to talk about Democrat vs Republican, white vs black or any of the other ridiculous divisions that dominate our public discourse I imagined our leaders going on television, telling the citizens that although we all want to be at Ground Zero we can't But there is work that is needed to be done all over America Our help is needed at community centers, to tutor children, to teach them to read, our work is needed at old age homes to visit the lonely and infirm, in gutted neighborhoods to rebuild housing and clean up parks, and convert abandoned lots into baseball fields I imagined leadership that would take this incredible energy, this generosity of spirit, and create a new unity in America born out of the chaos and tragedy of 9/11 A new unity that would send a message to terrorists everywhere If you attack us we will become stronger, cleaner, better educated, more unified You will strengthen our commitment to justice and democracy by your inhumane attacks on us I like a phoenix, out of the fire we will be reborn

And then came the speech "You are either with us or against us " And the bombing began And the old paradigm was restored as our leader encouraged us to show our patriotism by shopping and by volunteering to join groups that would turn in their neighbor for any suspicious behavior

In the 19 months since 9/11 we have seen our democracy compromised by fear and hatred Basic inalienable rights, due process, the sanctity of the home have been quickly compromised in a climate of fear A unified American public has grown bitterly divided and a world population that had profound sympathy and support for us has grown contemptuous and distrustful, viewing us as we once viewed the Soviet Union, as a rogue state

This past weekend Susan and I and the three kids went to Florida for a family reunion of sorts Amidst the alcohol and the dancing, sugar-rushing children there was, of course, talk of the war The most frightening thing about the weekend was the amount of times we were thanked for

the opening battle scene of Saving Private Ryan, we cringe at the thought of seeing the same on the nightly news. We are told it would be pornographic. We want no part of reality in real life. We demand that war be painstakingly realized on the screen but that war remain imagined and conceptualized in real life.

And in the midst of all this madness, where is the political opposition? Where have all the Democrats gone? Long time passing, long time ago? With apologies to Robert Byrd, I have to say it is pretty embarrassing to live in a country where a five-foot-one comedian has more guts than most politicians. We need leaders, not pragmatists that cower before the spin zones of former entertainment journalists. We need leaders who understand the Constitution, Congressmen who don't, in a moment of fear, abdicate their most important power, the right to declare war, to the executive branch. And please, can we stop the congressional sing-a-longs?

In this time when a citizenry applauds the liberation of a country as it lives in fear of its own freedom, when an administration official releases an attack ad questioning the patriotism of a legless Vietnam veteran running for Congress, when people all over the country fear reprisal if they use their right to free speech, it is time to get angry.

It is time to get fierce. It doesn't take much to shift the tide. My 11-year-old nephew mentioned earlier, a shy kid who never talks in class, stood up to his history teacher who was questioning Susan's patriotism. "That's my aunt you're talking about. Stop it!" And the stunned teacher backtracked and began stammering compliments in embarrassment.

Sports writers across the country reacted with such overwhelming fury at the Hall of Fame that the president of the Hall admitted he made a mistake and Major League Baseball disavowed any connection to the actions of the Hall's president. A bully can be stopped. So can a mob. It takes one person with the courage and a resolute voice. The journalists in this country can battle back at those who would re-write our Constitution in the Patriot Act II (or Patriot, the sequel, as we would call it in Hollywood). We are counting on you to star in that movie. Journalists can insist that they not be used as publicists by this administration. The next White House correspondent to be called on by Ari Fleischer should defer their question to the back of the room to the banished journalist-du-jour. Any instance of intimidation to free speech should be battled against. Any acquiescence to intimidation at this point will only lead to more intimidation. You have, whether you like it or not, an awesome responsibility and an awesome power.

The fate of discourse, the health of this republic is in your hands, whether you write on the left or the right. This is your time and the destiny you have chosen. We lay the continuance of our democracy on your desks and count on your pens to be mightier. Millions are watching and waiting in mute frustration and hope. Hoping for someone to defend the spirit and letter of our Constitution and to defy the intimidation that is visited upon us daily in the name of national security and warped notions of patriotism. Our ability to disagree, and our inherent right to question our leaders and criticize their actions, define who we are. To allow those rights to be taken away out of fear, to punish people for their beliefs, to limit access in the news media to differing opinions is to acknowledge our democracy's defeat. These are challenging times. There is a wave of hate that seeks to divide us, right and left, pro-war and antiwar.

In the name of my 11-year-old nephew and all the other unreported victims of this hostile and unproductive environment of fear, let us try to find our common ground. Let us celebrate this grand and glorious experiment that has survived for 227 years. To do so we must honor and fight vigilantly for the things that unite us. Like freedom, the First Amendment and yes, baseball.



TINA BROWN

The new idea men

Forget the embeds. The pretty new things are war intellectuals like Fareed Zakaria, Paul Berman and Victor Hanson.

By Tina Brown



April 17, 2003 | One of the many blessings of the war winding down will be regaining some head space from TV overload. Every morning for the last three weeks no sooner did I break away from the box for a shower than a thunderous promo on one of the four 24/7 cable news channels touted some heart-stopping event in the next segment. Hours were lost in a state of overstimulated, underfocused expectation, waiting in vain for the climax - the electronic equivalent of bad sex.

The more I watched TV, the more its inability to deliver satisfaction drove me hungrily back to print. The New York Times' 12-page "Nation at War" had to be gorged in full, then the tabs in a strange new reading pattern -- opinion pages first, trash news second. The wartime New York Post offered a bracing kick in the crotch for anyone worn out by the Times' many-sided thoughtfulness. The Post does a good line in insolent views imported from the Iranian journalist Amir Taheri. "Do (some Arabs feel) humiliated?" he writes. "So what? They should take a walk. If they want heroism they had better look for it in their own neck of the woods."

You tell 'em, Amir. Next time I see Michael Moore I shall beat him with my Christian Louboutin shoe.

Intellectual service journalists like Taheri are all on steroids. They are cranking out books and columns at an alarming rate. Every FedEx brings the galleys of yet another arcane chin-puller. I am up till 3 every morning frowning and nodding my way through new entries like "Terror and Liberalism" by the smart left-wing essayist Paul Berman who, in case you didn't know, is the last of the institutionally unaffiliated New York intellectuals, whose unexpected ideas make him the strange bedfellow of administration hawks.

During the "quagmire" week, when fashionable know-it-alls were dusting off their Vietnam metaphors, I dived into Francois Bizot's hair-raising memoir of his captivity in a Khmer Rouge camp -- only to find the plot had changed yet again and the vogue was for comparisons to the liberation of France. (Maybe that's on Bush's list too, right after Syria.)

The neocon gurus who fuel the action at the White House keep up a steady stream of armored literature. It's chic to know about Victor Davis Hanson, a classicist at California State University at Fresno, and a regular National Review contributor, who has become Dick Cheney's bedside favorite with grand military theories on "Carnage and Culture." And the cherubic octogenarian professor Bernard Lewis is in fierce social demand. He is deft enough to boil down a lifetime's learned study of Arab political history to a bon mot for the dessert. "One man. One vote. Once." The younger neocons, like the aptly named Max Boot at the Wall Street Journal, are harder to take. They seem to have emerged from test tubes with fully formed certainties.

All the upscale policy panels that pass for social life these days bring new complications. You scribble your e-mail address for some cute boffin over dinner at an awards function at the Harvard Club and the next thing you know your in box brims with links to treatises on the restructuring of Iraqi debt. These continue to flood in with the frequency of spam from porn sites offering to enlarge my penis. If Bush decides to take on Korea next, I'm leaving town. As it is I seem to spend half my time eating rice at the Asia Society.

The basic problem is that America has been indifferent to the rest of the world for so long, it's tough cramming the back story into a few nights a week. Thanks to the conglomeration of the networks, which a few years ago decided to treat news as a profit center, foreign affairs had pretty nearly vanished from the TV screens until 9/11 happened. If you mentioned the Turkmen, people assumed you were talking about a new band on MTV's "TRL."

But that's not good enough now. Power circles in New York are so competitive, everyone has to have the inside track on the next geopolitical tidbit. You're nothing if your private plane hasn't just touched down from a secret meeting with Chirac to help him mend fences.

The next addition to New York life will be intellectual trainers to supplement the other kind. The rich will take a leaf out of Bush's book and hire an off-the-peg Condoleezza Rice to stand by the exercise bike dispensing foreign policy talking points.

In a way they already have. His name is Fareed Zakaria, the 39-year-old editor of Newsweek's international edition, and the star superwonk on ABC's "This Week." Fareed's Bollywood sex appeal, social poise and awesome ability to deconstruct global issues make him New York's hot brainiac of choice. His timing is good, too. The thesis in his new book, "The Future of Freedom" - that unregulated democracy can undermine liberty -- would have been off-key a month ago in the selling of the war, but Baghdad's looters took to the streets just in time for publication day. The launch party at the Cosmopolitan Club was packed with court intellectuals from past administrations, ranging from Camelot's Arthur Schlesinger to Nixongate's Henry Kissinger, plus pumped-up pundits from the clever magazines and think tanks, and all the smart boys at the New Yorker.

Eggheads have to grab their place in the news cycle while they can.

After the Cold War, your average Sovietologist couldn't get arrested. Court intellectuals are usually a first-term phenomenon anyway, because politics always prevails over ideas. Remember the Clintonian dawn, with its rapturous "politics of meaning"? It didn't take long for that to curdle into the politics of just plain mean. By the second term, it was all about blow jobs.

ANZAC DAY, 25 April 2003

WHY I AM THANKFUL

ANZAC Day speech by Mayor Bob Harvey
Waikumete Cemetery, dawn

DIGNITARIES PRESENT Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt
 Hon Chris Carter
 MP David Cunliffe
 MP Lynn Pillay
 Base Commander Stuart McKenzie
 Other Distinguished Guests

I welcome you here this morning on this very special day, a time to give thanks and acknowledgement, and also to acknowledge the moment that brings hope that we share in this small, green Pacific country. For peace and resolve. As we look around we see the flickering light of our candles together. This moment unites us all.

The last month has seen a global conflict, although played out in a small country in the Middle East, every part of this planet has carried the images and sadness every day. We are not unmoved or unaware that in this special place, at dawn, the past is also the present. Each and every one of us can only pray that it is not the future. On this morning we give thanks to those who fought so that we can appreciate what peace and freedom is, and can be.

It is so heartening for all of us gathered here today to see that once again the faces of young New Zealanders, a younger generation who thankfully have not suffered the devastation and human toll of war firsthand. Slowly, as the dawn emerges, we are moving from darkness into light, and our thoughts turn to those who have gone before.

The candles we hold at this special service symbolise the hope we hold dear for the future, and the shining lives of those who have left us. We now see the faces of us all, clearly. Our thoughts move naturally from our memories of those we have lost, to the present world. At this moment we must turn our eyes not only to the cenotaph and the wreaths, but to each other.

Put your arms around your family. Hold on to them. We have seen this occasion build and build through the years. Today there are thousands of us here today. ANZAC Day will always be a day for remembrance. But it is also a moment of nation-building.

From out of the ashes of war, New Zealand is committed to peacekeeping from East Timor, to Afghanistan, and now soon to Iraq, or young men and women will assist the rebuilding of countries, to restore peace to a troubled land and people.

I would like to acknowledge those who served, and those who still serve, and I would like to pay a special thanks to all those officers and companies who have served at Whenuapai and Hobsonville over sixty years. For your readiness, your service to the City, and to your country, over so many years, we salute you.

But on this day most of all I want to thank the ANZACS. Many did not return, paying the ultimate price for peace. We will never forget them.

The spirit of comradeship, dignity, strength and courage is embodied in the men and women who stand before us now.

Like the candles that we held in the dark this morning, so let their memories stay alive.

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