

Editorial

Buckle up those 'belts and start 'biding them laws

Increased concern about traffic safety is evidenced by passage of the seat belt law which will go into effect in Nebraska Sept. 1. However, this concern about safety has not evidenced itself in the behavior of Lincoln drivers.

Traffic safety is a must in Lincoln with all the construction work being done. Drivers should be extra cautious and alert when driving around these areas. The streets would be much safer if drivers would simply obey the traffic laws.

Many Lincoln drivers seem to have forgotten that a red light means stop. Even fewer remember that yellow lights have any significance whatsoever. Both lights are being ignored with increasing frequency.

Some drivers also believe that these days they can turn from whichever lane they happen to be in as long as they look first. Many also disregard crosswalks and drive as fast through residential areas as they do on main thoroughfares. These two violations especially endanger children and elderly pedestrians.

Another traffic hazard in Lincoln is the bicyclists who insist on taking the main streets as their route. The city has provided an excellent system of bike routes on streets that are wide enough to accommodate bicyclists. The bicyclists should use these instead of busy streets such as Vine, 16th and 17th streets, especially during rush hour traffic.

The non-bike route streets are too narrow for the bicyclists. If they try to ride close to the curb, the cars must still go around them, often nearly hitting a car in the next lane. If the bicyclists try to take up an entire lane, traffic backs up behind them.

If bike routes were used and traffic laws obeyed, driving in Lincoln would be much safer and perhaps there would be no cause for increased concern.

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The Nebraskan

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Proposition 13 takes its toll

Legislation 'liberally' topped with fees

This city, which is nothing if not novel in its nonchalance about mere morals, is pioneering a stern new style of governance. It is the art of liberal governance in a conservative era. It does not involve government spending for social ends, but government causing private-sector spending. It is a reverberation of Proposition 13, the 1978 measure that curtailed local taxation in California.



George Will

San Francisco's board of supervisors has declared that downtown developers must pay a one-time fee of one dollar per square foot of floor space to finance on-site child-care facilities or as a contribution to a child-care fund to be allocated by the political system. This fee is piled on top of other fees for transportation, housing, and "open space" for parks. There's even a fee of one percent of construction costs to purchase art.

This last means that a developer of a \$100 million high-rise must pay \$1 million for art. Now, if the supervisors, having legislated a monetary demand, can just legislate a supply of good art... It is odd: The sort of people passing and applauding such fees are not worshipers of market forces. But unless they believe that the demand for art will magically produce a supply of good art, the fee is a windfall for lousy artists, and a way to litter public spaces with eyesores.

Regarding child care, a need of sorts exists. Nationally, 51 percent of mothers of children under five work outside the home. Supervisor

Nancy Walker, sponsor of the child-care fee, notes projections that in the next 15 years 100,000 new jobs will be created in downtown San Francisco. It is possible to argue that child care is a "social cost" of development and therefore developers ought to pay for it. But such an argument is problematic in the idea of "social costs" and in the false clarity regarding who actually pays.

Child care is a desire of a certain category of workers. Should not the cost of it be borne by those who desire it? But developers are an inviting target on which to displace the burden. However, if the board of supervisors wants to closely associate costs and benefits for services, they should become really rigorous in imposing user fees: Parents should be made to pay the full cost of education, riders the cost of public transportation, etc.

Because such services are understood to benefit the community generally, they are usually considered services to be paid for, at least in part, by the community through its collective enterprise: government. But in explaining the resort to fees, political philosophy is less relevant than a political fact: Proposition 13. It limited the ability of local governments to impose taxes. It did not limit the public's desire for services, or the desire of the political class to distribute benefits.

So, here is a paradox. Proposition 13 was produced by anger about the taxation dimension of "big government." Now it is producing a new mode of governance that is aggressively intrusive and blurs the costs of government action.

The fees levied on developers will mean higher rents, and then higher prices of the goods and

services provided by the businesses that rent space from the developers. Furthermore, San Francisco's fees may help the toiling masses—in Oakland. Businesses may have their headquarters in San Francisco but their labor concentrations across the bay.

Bubbling behind San Francisco's government-by-regulation is northern California leftism. It is an amalgam of anti-growth, anti-business, peace-posing and eco-battiness.

There is an ordinance that no new building shall cast a shadow on a public park between one hour after sunset and one hour before sunset. If shadows are awful, why not cut down the trees? But, then, if people do not like the attributes of cities—density, tall buildings—the supervisors might do better by buying them bus tickets to Montana.

The supervisors recently voted official support for the grape boycott. It was an action of no measurable value to the grape pickers, but was demonstrably detrimental to the 60,000 persons (disproportionately minorities) who work in the convention industry. Several agribusiness organizations have moved their meetings elsewhere.

The supervisors voted against San Francisco being home for the battleship Missouri. The vote was without force and the Navy ignored it. The supervisors' rationale was that the ship might cause the Soviets to make the bay area a military target. Presumably the Soviets have not noticed the various bay-area military installations, or Livermore Lab. Surprisingly, the supervisors did not impose a fee on the ship—compensation for wear-and-tear on the water—with the money to be spent at the discretion of the supervisors.

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Unthoughtful parkers ruin man's day (and car)

On March 28, 1985, I was in Boulder, Colorado. I ordered a new Honda Civic CRX. I bought it in Boulder because the dealer here in Lincoln, where I bought my last new Honda, didn't even have one I could test drive.

I waited 98 days. It finally was delivered. I drove all the way out to Boulder to pick it up. It is a beautiful bright red car. I just love it. All of the waiting was worth it.

I am a senior at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. I work full time during the day and attend classes at night. I wash, wax and admire his little jewel every chance I get. I even took several rolls of pictures of it, before anything ight happen to it.

I am very careful when I drive it. I am even

more careful when I park it. I would walk an extra two blocks if I thought my car would be safer. I have even been driving to work a little early in the morning so I can park it in a particular spot in my company's parking lot. It is an end spot, such that no one can park on the one side of me. Whenever I park my car I walk around it and make sure everything is OK. Before I get into it I do the same.

Yep, you guessed it. Today in the company parking lot somebody put that first scratch on my shiny little car. A body and fender man said it would cost \$60 to make it look new again. Somebody that works for the same company as I do.

Is everybody careless? Does anybody know how to drive, and park? Can anybody open their doors without banging into the car next to them? Anybody with half a brain could tell, if he cared to look—hey, we have a new car here!!!

My personal policy for parking my car is: If I can't get into the space and in and out of my car without damaging the car next to me, I park somewhere else. Now wouldn't it be wonderful if everybody would adhere to such a policy. I would spend \$60, even \$100 to make my car look new again if I thought it would stay that way more than 26 days.

I went downtown and had a hamburger, then went for a long walk, instead of studying Philosophy. At 6:30 I went to my Philosophy class. Professor Becker was talking about euclidean geometry, a priori synthetic reasoning, Riemann, Einstein, parallel lines and curved space. I was taking notes, but I was thinking about how difficult it is to have something nice, and keep it that way.

Bob Johnson
 Arts & Sciences
 senior

Letters