

News For Thought



London Set To Surcharge Older Motorcycles

Another European capital city has committed to hitting riders of older motorcycles with a fee in an attempt to improve EU air quality.

Recently, Paris announced a ban on motorcycles made before 1999 from certain parts of the city during the day. Violators of the ban face a €35 (US \$40) fine. The French capital has some of the worst air pollution in the world, and the thinking behind the new law is that older motorcycles will not have been built to meet Euro emissions standards and are therefore inclined to pollute disproportionately.

London, too, is desperate to reduce its pollution levels, which are consistently in violation of EU regulations. Within the first week of 2016, London exceeded its pollution limit for the entire year.

The British capital has long had a daily congestion charge -- currently set at £11.50 (US \$17) -- to discourage cars from entering the heart of the city. Motorcycles and scooters have hitherto been exempt from the charge, but plans are in the works to start charging two-wheeled vehicles made before 2007, when Euro 3 emissions standards were first applied to motorcycles.

London motorcyclists have known about this and were expecting to see the charge applied when London introduces its new Ultra Low Emission Zone in 2020, but it is now being reported that the charge could be implemented as soon as next year, and concerned riders have expressed anger at the possibility of a sped-up schedule.

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Congress To Consider Anti-Profiling Resolution

House Resolution 831 was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on July 13, 2016 to "Promote awareness of motorcycle profiling and encourage collaboration and communication with the motorcycle community and law enforcement officials to

prevent instances of profiling."

The non-binding resolution defines motorcycle profiling as "the arbitrary practice of law enforcement using the fact that a person rides a motorcycle or wears motorcycle related apparel as a factor in deciding to stop and question, take enforcement action, arrest, or search a person or vehicle with or without legal basis under the United States Constitution," and cites complaints surrounding motorcycle profiling in all 50 states.

The National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM) is working with other state and national motorcycle organizations to address profiling legislatively, and with Washington enacting the first anti-profiling law in 2011, followed recently by Maryland, a national motorcycle anti-profiling measure would advance the efforts in every state.

H.Res.831 specifies that the House of Representatives:

- (1) promotes increased public awareness on the issue of motorcycle profiling;
- (2) encourages collaboration and communication with the motorcycle community and law enforcement to engage in efforts to end motorcycle profiling; and
- (3) urges State law enforcement officials to include statements condemning motorcycle profiling in written policies and training materials.

H.Res.831, introduced by Congressmen Reid Ribble (R-WI) and Tim Walberg (R-MI), has been referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary, and concerned motorcyclists are encouraged to contact their federal representatives to support the bill.

Yelp Censors Christian Bikers

In a July 18th e-mail feedback from internet business review giant Yelp, the Yelp Support Team in San Francisco informed the elder of a Christian motorcycle group that his review of a coffee shop had been removed after it "was brought to our attention by the Yelp community, and we found that it fell outside our Content Guidelines..." which were attached.

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The offending post? "Removed Content: The Bikers for Christ Motorcycle Ministry is a Christian clean and sober group. We meet there (The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf) because they just serve great coffee with a great group of baristas, and a clean and neat facility and no political agenda like Starbucks. Pastor Tom-BFC M/M

Bikers Are More Attractive Than Drivers

The results of a new research study in England finally validate what we all know to be true: motorcycle riders are more attractive than car drivers.

The study, by U.K. insurance specialists Carole Nash, asked over 1000 adults to rate the looks of the opposite sex when dressed in normal attire and riding kit. The aim of the experiment was to try and change perceptions of motorcyclists and overturn any negative stereotypes.

In five out of six cases, members of the public dressed as motorcyclists were voted as more desirable than when dressed as drivers. It's not just levels of attractiveness which came out in the bikers' favor, because riders are also seen to have more positive personality traits - people who own a motorcycle are viewed as adventurous by a third of the opposite sex (34%), closely followed by daring (28%) and fun (26%).

The research also revealed that "one in four blokes would pretend they owned a motorbike to impress a woman and almost a third (31%) said they'd go the whole way and learn to ride one if they knew it would impress a potential partner.

Club Colors Barred From Headstone

Before biker Richard Cody died on Sept. 5, 2013, he told his family and friends he wanted the logo of his beloved South Madison Motorcycle Club on his headstone, but nearly two years later his son Jeremy was forced to file a lawsuit against the city of Painesville, Ohio to make sure his father gets his last wish.

Representing the family and club, Aid to Injured Motorcyclists (A.I.M.) Attorney Ralph C. Buss filed a motion for preliminary and permanent injunction to prevent city officials from removing, defacing, touching or changing the headstone of the Vietnam veteran buried in Riverside Cemetery, after officials informed the Plaintiff that the club colors engraved into the back of his father's grave marker, "is not deemed appropriate" and ordered the S.M.M.C. artwork to be removed within 60 days at their own expense.

Buss told The News-Herald in a May 10 interview with the newspaper that "the headstone's logo is not vulgar or offensive in any way, and it complies with the requirements that were in place in 2014 when it was installed" and further charged that new regulations "conveniently" passed afterwards violate the First Amendment and "are nothing more than a license allowing city employees or agents to judge a person's expression and deny it without any reasoning."

All the media attention and ensuing barrage of publicity, including a 3,500-signature petition asking city council to allow the headstone to remain unaltered, and accompanying legal actions, resulted in the desired effect.

"When I first got the letter from the City of Painesville telling me that after two years I had to remove my father's headstone due to it being "offensive", I was outraged," Cody recently told Ridin' On Motorcycle Magazine (www.RidinOn.com). "My only thoughts were 'I don't think so!' For two months I pleaded with the city to change their minds and they were not budging. So I then got social media involved and contacted my attorney Ralph C. Buss, who just happens to be known for helping other motorcycle enthusiasts when in need. Within three days the City of Painesville decided it was in their best interest to let the stone be left there. It was my father's wishes to have his club patch engraved on his headstone and I was not about to let that wish be taken from him."

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