

# Car End Game | Cycling Politics | Bicycle Theft

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As a rather interesting 2008 in both political and economically terms draws to an end, we enter 2009 with trepidation. If anything, 2008 will be marked as the official beginning of the demise of the motor industry in its present form. Gas Guzzlers are no longer profitable to manufacture but difficult to sell and expensive to own. Ironically, it's in the home town of mass car production that we see its spectacular decline. It was started in Detroit, US by Henry Ford and it's here where end game has begun; car giants General Motors and Chrysler the first to flounder. How has the bicycle fared amongst all this chaos. Being cheap to produce with a low cost of ownership, one would expect booming bike use. The good news is sales are up but the increase is mainly due to recreational use. The streets of towns and cities speak the plain truth; bicycles and cyclist are few. Unfortunately, governments have not grasped the present economic opportunity to radicalise bicycle usage. At best, governments have offered half baked 'bike to work' tax rebate schemes. This is not what is needed; bicycles are affordable to working people. £150/\$150/€150 will get you a new decent set of wheels; it's not a cost thing. And what about the school kids, how do they apply for the scheme? It's the facilities, infrastructure and safety issues that need to be addressed. A big shift in culture is needed. For starters, we could build a hell of a lot of bike lanes for 1 mile of motorway.

Another ongoing problem is bike theft, all of us cyclist have experienced the feeling of having our bike robbed or at the very least, a part of it. In light of this, I decided to take a leisurely stroll around my native city of Dublin, Ireland. With camera in hand, I had no problem finding pictures of broken, damaged, vandalised bikes with many parts stolen. The most common items of theft appeared to be the front wheel and/or saddle; anything not locked down was stolen, easy game. I even managed to come across a folding bike with its saddle stolen.

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