

SOLARTAXI

By the power of the sun

Everywhere Swiss school-teacher Louis Palmer drives, he manages to draw a crowd.

And he's drawn a lot of crowds.

Palmer and his now world famous SolarTaxi made a stop in Vancouver yesterday to kick off the North American part of his world tour.

He's already driven through 27 countries and covered 32,000 kilometres in his trusty blue companion – which tows a trailer of solar panels – while raising awareness for global warming and alternative energy.

"So far, I can't believe I have made it two-thirds around the world," Palmer told a welcoming party outside the Telus World of Science yesterday. "I'm a bit nervous about this last third of my tour, but so far we haven't had any problems."

For Palmer, the global zero-emissions trek is the realization of a childhood dream.

He fantasized about driving around the world at the age of 11, until he learned about global warming in school.

"[The teacher] said when you are driving a car, you are part of



- Rob Kruyt, 24 hours

Louis Palmer from Lucerne, Switzerland stopped in Vancouver with his SolarTaxi on its around-the-world voyage yesterday..

the problem," Palmer recalls. "What he told me was shocking."

And then he saw the devastation climate change can have firsthand during his travels as an adult.

"After seeing the tragedy of global warming, I decided I am going to start this project and see what happens."

The result has been nothing short of breathtaking.

In the face of sky-rocketing gas prices, Palmer has managed to make it this far on \$100 of electricity.

And along the way, he's shown every curious onlooker just how far clean energy can take you.

- Matt Kielyka, 24 hours

COMMUNITY POLICING

New police office in southeast Van

A new community policing office will specifically address issues faced by Vancouver's South Asian community.

Inspector Daryl Wiebe and Constable Roger Rai announced yesterday the opening of a community office adjacent to the

Ross St. Sikh temple in southeast Vancouver. The purpose of the office, said Wiebe, is to reach community members through forums, gatherings and literature, thus preventing crimes that are common to the area.

"This initiative, and the growth of our relationship with this

vibrant community, is destined to help the VPD to meet its strategic goals of reducing property crime, violent crime and gang violence," said Wiebe.

The office, which will have its grand opening July 6th, will be open Sundays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

- Lucy Gotell, 24 hours

What's on your mind?

■ **IN STATING THAT** people shouldn't bother calling TransLink, but call the police instead, Ken Hardie is putting the responsibility for rider safety on the shoulders of riders. And perhaps Mandy would have called the cops had her phone not died after being on hold with TransLink for several minutes! As a regular transit user, I find leaving a pregnant woman who was obviously upset to fend for herself unacceptable. Where's the accountability?

- Lori Kittelberg, via e-mail

■ **I COUNT MYSELF** lucky to live in a city where an emergency response team will take however long is necessary to ensure the safety and survival of a loved one no matter how much it inconveniences people. I feel ashamed of those who feel the disruption of their plans is more important, and hope they feel the same when looking at themselves. It's about time people woke up and started placing real value on a life. So you missed the ferry, big deal.

- Josh Gibson, via e-mail

Listen up, Gordo:
Here's some advice

Open letter to the Premier – from a friend:

Dear Gordon:

I know what you're thinking: "Here's Alex again, trying to tell me how to do my job."

Well, it seems that you're having some problems, notwithstanding a 12-point lead in the polls that could easily evaporate by next year, so, I thought, being the generous fellow I am, I'd pitch in and offer some advice.

After all, you won't answer specific questions about your pals Ken Dobell, Pat Kinsella and Mark Jiles; you refuse to address easily answerable questions regarding the Basi-Virk trial; and you dismiss the very serious problems over at the Ministry of Children and Families; and largely disregard the press.

Ergo, let's give you a hand.

I haven't had to do this since your temporary insanity over giving away the Musqueam Golf Course, but, more to the point: This carbon tax of yours is sheer lunacy.

While China and the U.S. continue to spew unending streams of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, you, apparently, rather than pushing for real solutions through massive technological advance, want to punish the hardest working British Columbians for the eco-crimes of major world polluters, who hide behind several layers of bureaucrats, and incomprehensible, self-serving rhetoric.

It's similar to the way you have protected larger industrial polluters in this province from environmental accountability.

What you are doing with this ridiculous carbon tax is akin to sending a jay walker to death row because a given murderer had a magnificent lawyer. Worse yet, it puts you in the company of some of the greatest buffoons and hypocrites in the climate-change cauldron of alarmists: Al Gore, Stephane Dion, David Suzuki, Elizabeth May.

God help you, Premier!

China, the world's biggest CO2 emitter, builds a coal-burning plant every six days (you should know, B.C. sells China huge reserves of coal every year) and the Chinese people purchase 20,000 cars per day.

The good ole Excited States of Amnesia boasts roughly five per cent of

the world's population but consume 30 per cent of the world's resources.

If our entire country adopted the intellectually fraudulent Kyoto Protocol and achieved the fantasy targets, we could only accomplish such a miracle by shutting down every plane, train, automobile and office building for

seven years, and even then our contribution to reducing global CO2 levels would be negligible.

I was astonished to read those nuggets of wisdom two years ago. You might know the columnist. His name is Michael Campbell (he's always been one of my favourites, but don't tell anybody).

Forget that crude prices are nudging \$150 per barrel, ignore that we are looking as if we will become bridesmaid to America's Next Top Economic Crisis, why the hell would you burden the working stiff in this province with yet another tax?

We're taxed to death and having you pile on and mind-numbingly declare revenue neutrality, is, for lack of a better word, nuts.

The \$100 you sent me went into my gas tank – thanks by the way – would you like to bet that's the way it was for a majority of B.C.ers?

Up-province, they are already paying as much as 20 per cent more in energy costs than those in the Lower Mainland and travel twice as far to get to work. What do you say, Gord, to the carpenter from Revelstoke, with a wife working a double-shift at a local diner, both of whom pay into a mortgage and car payments, and still find time to raise three kids? They're lucky to meet each other once a day for half an hour on the downside of a doomed marriage.

Believe me, they don't need the additional hit at the pump, even if it cumulatively amounts to 'only' four bags of groceries per year.

But do you remember them?

These are the people that you promised to protect, and those few little words, "B.C. carbon tax", keep them awake at night almost as much as the next three words keep me awake at night; PREMIER CAROLE JAMES.

I bet you're sleeping just fine, though, Gord.

For now.

agtsakumis@yahoo.ca



alex g. tsakumis
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