

AROUND THE GLOBE

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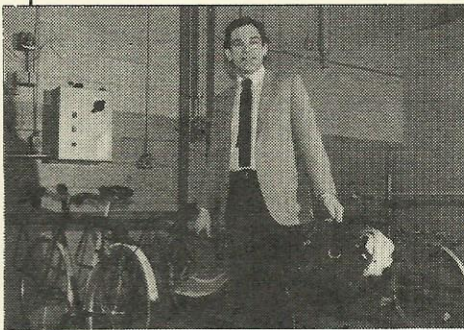
Garage space provided for bicycle parking

BY BUD JORGENSEN

Thinking of a bicycle as a vehicle is a concept that passes by a lot of people. A common view is that bikes are toys for kids or, these days, accessories to recreation.

But that attitude is unique to the industrial countries, and worldwide the bicycle is still the most important vehicle. In Toronto, the bicycle was the fastest growing mode of transportation during the 1980s. There are more than 40,000 regular bicycle commuters in Metropolitan Toronto. At The Globe and Mail there now is one less excuse for not considering the bike as an alternative. In response to pleas from the hard core of Globe employees who bike to work, Tony Ducksbury has set aside space in the garage for bike parking. (The location is near the south entry door to the loading dock area.)

We now have good quality bike racks to replace the wheelbender



types that have been gathering rust in the parking lots. A key feature of these new racks is that they easily accommodate the U-type locks that a majority of commuters use.

Tony was a bit skeptical about the demand for bike racks in winter but several people ride year-round. Even when the temperature drops well below zero, it's possible to dress comfortably against the cold. A nylon shell and nylon jogger's pants will fit over office clothes. A toque, leather mitts and heavy boots complete the package to provide adequate protection.

A 1986 study by the Toronto City Cycling Committee estimated that 104,000 adults in Metro Toronto regularly cycle to work, to school and when shopping.

While the bicycle is used regularly for utilitarian purposes, another survey by the committee found that 69 per cent of riders cited health and fitness as the primary reason for cycling. By getting exercise on the way to and from work, bicycle commuters can easily get the dose of exercise recommended by Fitness Canada. Riding six kilometres three times a week maintains the recommended exercise level.

In addition to health and fitness reasons, there is a solid financial argument for bicycle commuting. The City Cycling Committee has estimated the cost of riding to work at 60 cents a day, less than one-third of



current transit rates and far below the cost of operating an automobile.

That cost estimate for a bicycle is based on a purchase price of \$500, with allowances for regular maintenance and a complete annual overhaul. The City Cycling Committee will be promoting the benefits of commuting during the Bike-to-Work Week, June 10-15. Information on that event can be obtained from committee staff by phoning 392-7592 at City Hall.

For bike lore see page 6.