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KOUDENHORN B-10 HAARLEM (HOLLAND)

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Hilversum, Steynlaan 5, Holland

Contradictio in Terminis: Amsterdam Police "steals" bicycles to prevent bicycle-thieving. Length: 70 metres.

In the course of November the Bureau of Crime-prevention of the Amsterdam police started an action which was unique for the Netherlands. To diminish the bicycle-thieving in the Dutch capital it was decided to pick up every cycle which was found deserted and/or unlocked on the streets. Part of these bicycles was stolen before by joy-riders and left on various places in town; another part was discarded by the owners. So the strange situation arose that in a town of bicycle-thieves the policemen became thieves themselves.

In a period of four weeks 2500 bicycles were taken away. Of this huge amount only 150 were found back by their owners. The rest was sold as scrap-iron. The most important result was, that in one month the theft of bicycles in Amsterdam diminished with over 25%.

The story runs as follows:

Amsterdam is a town of 900.000 people; 600.000 of them possess a bicycle. This causes a great traffic-problem.

In the vicinity of the stations and the great offices there are bicycle-parking places, but they are always overcrowded.

So many people leave their bicycles on the street; when they return from their work they take their bikes home again.

However, there are bikes in the streets, which are never taken away.

It is this sort of bikes that is fetched by the police, and brought to a storage-yard which soon became too small for the 2500 pieces.

Here people can come and look for their property.

Here also come the scrap-iron buyers.

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