



Karen Dacy and Clare Rocznoik leave Carlton court yesterday.

Anti-cigarette protest as two women given bonds

By KAREN COOKE

About 30 anti-cigarette advertising protesters demonstrated outside Carlton court yesterday where two women charged with defacing a billboard waited for their case to be heard.

The women were charged with wilful damage and with defacing a poster owned by W.D. and H.O. Wills Ltd advertising Sterling cigarettes at the corner of Flemington Road and Dryburgh Street in North Melbourne on 31 March this year. It was alleged that the women wrote "Cough. BUGA UP" on the sign with silver spray paint.

The case was rescheduled to Melbourne Magistrates Court and was eventually heard by Mr Hugh Adams SM. Karen Dacy, 21, speech therapy student of George Street, Fitzroy, and Clare Lydia Rocznoik, 22, medical student, of Hilton Street, Clifton Hill, were put on a 12-months good behavior bond and ordered to pay \$106.90 each in costs.

Both women pleaded not guilty.

Counsel for the women, Mr Neil Cole, said his clients thought they were acting morally, believing that the law was not morally correct in allowing cigarette advertising.

BUGA-UP is an organisation of "Billboard Utilising Graffitiists Against Unhealthy Promotions".

Mr Adams said that the

women's moral views on tobacco did not excuse the damaging of other people's property. He said he did not record a conviction because he took into account the women's ages, character and future job prospects.

Mr Adams ruled that the women should not pay the tobacco company's legal costs.

Constable David Mooney, of Carlton police, said he was patrolling in a divisional van in Flemington Road about 11.15 pm, when he saw the two women standing in front of the sign which had been written on.

He said a few moments later, he intercepted the women on bicycles. He said Ms Rocznoik then produced a can of silver spray paint from her handbag.

Constable Mooney said that when she was asked why she had defaced the billboard, Ms Dacy said she was a speech therapist who worked with people who have had parts of their throat, tongue or face removed because of cancer caused by smoking, and that advertisements enticing young people to smoke were immoral.

He said Ms Rocznoik replied that she was a medical student who recently started working in a hospital, where she became upset by the deaths of people who had smoke-related cancers.

Constable Mooney said the women were co-operative and "quite nice".