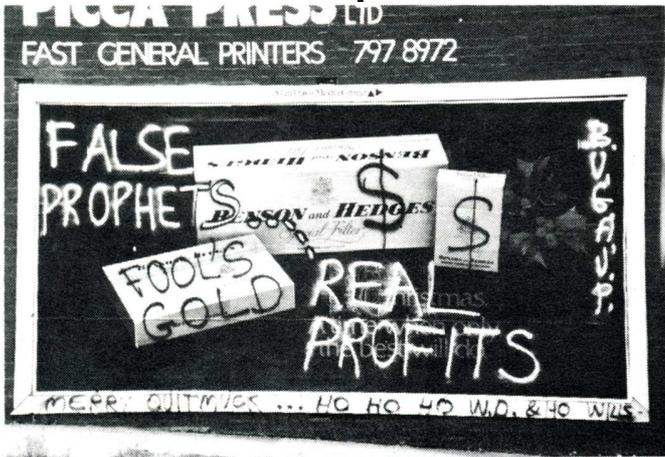


# BILLBORED

Number 4, December 1982

THE UN-OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF B.U.G.A. U.P.  
BILLBOARD UTILISING GRAFFITISTS AGAINST  
UNHEALTHY PROMOTIONS

Price  
20 Cents



## THE BEGINNING OF THE END?

As the B.U.G.A. U.P. campaign enters its fourth year, there are increasingly more indications that the promoters of unhealthy products are feeling the effects.

Until recently, the advertising and legal drug industries have maintained a front of nonchalance when asked about the effects of B.U.G.A. U.P., claiming that the graffitists were nothing more than a bunch of juvenile delinquents who would soon tire of their game and disappear. They claimed that the campaign was having no effect, other than the irritation and expense of having to replace a few posters.

But the last couple of months have seen some dramatic changes in their attitude which amount to a realisation that the B.U.G.A. U.P. campaign is a symptom of a groundswell which marks the beginning of the end for unhealthy promotions.

## THE GREAT W.A. SCARE

The turning point came with the threatened banning of all tobacco promotions in Western Australia last month. The Bill covered a 11 forms of promotion - including sponsorship - and provided realistic penalties for breaches. Every responsible health body in the world has been calling for this type of control for years, but no politician has dared try to actually implement it before. The fear of the repercussions from the tobacco industry was second only to fear of the press, who stand to lose a significant source of advertising revenue.

When the Bill passed through the legislative Assembly, the tobacco and advertising industries went into a full-scale panic. The newspapers responded enthusiastically to a circular from the Advertising Federation of Australia which asked them to denounce the proposed ban in whatever ways they could. They ran full-page advertisements condemning the Bill, their most vocal complaint being that the loss of sponsorship by tobacco companies would mean the end of sport in W.A. The tobacco industry bleated on about the potential loss of 5500 jobs, while at the same time claiming that bans on advertising wouldn't reduce the incidence of smoking in any case. Professional lobbyists were sent to Perth to convince the politicians that the ban would be catastrophic for Western Australian culture, sports and economy. The health issues were dwarfed by the spectre of losing the Benson and Hedges cricket to another state, and the bill was defeated in the Legislative Council.

## PRESS TURN AGAINST B.U.G.A. U.P.

Until recently, the press have given B.U.G.A. U.P. a fair amount of positive publicity, (considering the revenue they received from unhealthy promotions carried by their publications). But the W.A. Bill scare seems to have changed their attitude abruptly. Whereas the movement has been portrayed in the past as an amusing curiosity, rather outspoken but a fairly harmless source of good visual stuff to report, recent articles have started painting a picture of radical subversives, bell-bent on the destruction of society.

Last month The Bulletin concocted a web of intrigue designed to prove that B.U.G.A. U.P. is a front for an anarchist group who are "pursuing a political agenda disguised as support for public health".

A few weeks later, the Mirror, swept up by the anarchy theme, said "next time you see a billboard defaced by graffiti writers, ask yourself whether the next target might be the wall of your house. We should be frightened of the new anarchy in our midst".

Shortly after, the Herald ran an item on page 2 headlined "BUGA UP ARE URBAN HOOLIGANS- AD MAN", which reported that the president of the OAAA claimed that the movement was costing the industry "several hundred thousand dollars a year". A change of heart from previous claims that B.U.G.A. U.P. is "just annoying".

Journalists sympathetic to the cause have revealed that since the W.A. scare, stories critical of the tobacco industry or in support of B.U.G.A. U.P. have been rejected by editors, presumably on instruction from their publication's advertising department. Although this censorship makes it difficult to get the truth across to the public, it is comforting to know that the B.U.G.A. U.P. campaign is proving so threatening to the Unhealthy Promotions industry.

## MUTINY WITHIN THE INDUSTRY

Although they have had a stay of execution, the tobacco industry now realise that the tide has turned against them, and their parasites such as the advertising agencies and journals who print their ads, must now realise that the days of easy money from the legal drug industry are numbered. They have clung on for long enough, and if they don't make alternative

plans now they will be hard hit when unhealthy promotions are finally outlawed.

The back-stabbing has already begun overseas as the advertising industry realises the mileage to be had from denouncing the tobacco industry as the black sheep of the corporate world.

The director-general of the British Advertising Association said last year that the battle to save cigarette advertising would soon end in defeat, and the "domino theory" predicts that alcohol and other unhealthy promotions would be next. In July of this year, the British advertising journal "Campaign" denounced BAT's abuse of the advertising regulations after a sponsorship scandal in a way that clearly illustrates the impending mutiny within the advertising industry, saying:

"it is not a particularly honourable way for a tobacco company to behave, and it will also provide ammunition for those critics who believe that all forms of cigarette promotion should be banned. The rest of the industry should disown it".

Last month, an advertising consultant addressing an Outdoor Advertising Association of Australia conference said that the industry should consider dropping cigarette ads so as to defuse B.U.G.A.U.P. He argued that the public would lose sympathy for billboard re-facers and this sacrifice of one product could stem the tide which is threatening the industry on a much broader base.

The B.U.G.A. U.P. campaign has helped stimulate public debate about unhealthy promotions and the more conservative bodies which have for too long floundered in fear of treading on toes have been given the courage to act according to their conscience. The day will come when the media will sacrifice lucrative sources of ad dollars in the interests of the public. The sooner they start phasing out their dependence on these sources the better for all concerned.

## DRINK-DRIVING: TREATING THE SYMPTOMS

The recent introduction of random breath testing in N.S.W. has shown how effectively the government can act to prevent death and suffering when it really wants to. The immediate and dramatic reduction of road fatalities came as no surprise to health and safety experts who have been lobbying for the new law. What has been surprising is the near hysterical reaction of the community to the threat of being caught driving over the .05 limit.

Pubs and clubs claim to be suffering an enormous drop in patronage, which indicates the extent to which drink-driving had been previously considered quite normal by a significant proportion of drinkers. The press even reported parties being cancelled because people couldn't imagine going out for an evening without returning drunk.



*A recent hit on an alcohol billboard*

The millions of dollars the legal drug industry spends on advertising to perpetuate the social pressure to drink to

excess has obviously paid off. In spite of a temporary drop in trade, they have gotten off lightly. By adopting the line that drinkers need to be educated into not driving while drunk, they appear to have a social conscience while avoiding the real issue of educating the public about the general problem of alcohol abuse.

Even the A.M.A. has become party to this perversion of health education by funding a series of radio advertisements which push the idea that really good drinkers don't drive when they are drunk. Would it not be more reasonable for doctors, well acquainted with the epidemic ill health and social destruction caused by alcohol abuse, to adopt the more responsible attitude that a good drinker doesn't drink too much in the first place.

Hopefully, when the initial paranoia has worn off and drunk drivers venture back onto the streets, the government will take the next logical step and attack advertising which perpetuates the attitude that "getting pissed" is an essential part of having fun. Only then will drug education programmes make some progress against alcohol abuse.

## PUSHERS FACE THE FINAL CURTAIN



Actors Equity made page-one news this month when it called upon its 9000 members to boycott productions sponsored by tobacco companies and to refuse to appear in tobacco advertisements.

This move was prompted by requests from the NSW State Cancer Council and the Australian Consumer Association. B.U.G.A. U.P. has raised public consciousness of the issue of tobacco company sponsorship of the arts through a series of protests during the year. Actor Warren Mitchell added considerable credibility to the idea of a boycott when he announced publicly in August that he would not work for any theatre that accepted tobacco money.

Inevitably, Graham Kennedy and Stuart Wagstaff, both pushers of w.d. & h.o. wills products, attacked the union on the grounds that their advertisements did not encourage people to take up smoking.

## THE ROTHMANS CON - PART 2

(The story so far: Many interesting relationships between prominent persons in N.S.W. government and rothmans have been observed.)

\* The N.S.W. Dept. of Leisure, Sport and Tourism has given half its library of sports films to the rothmans national sport foundation.

\* The N.S.W. Premier has appointed Reg Watson, a former managing director of rothmans, to the post of N.S.W. Agent General in London. Mr. Watson was responsible for the launch of winfield cigarettes, which are now killing more Australians per year than any other brand.

## DANCING TO THE DRUG-PUSHERS' TUNE



*"Walking Cigarettes" protest the ballet in Melbourne.*

The Australian Ballet became another victim of the tobacco habit when it recently accepted a "fix" of \$400,000 from the Benson and Hedges company (Amatil). The money is to be spent on "special activities" during 1983 which is the ballet's 21st year. No doubt these "special activities" will constitute a series of cigarette advertisements sponsored by the ballet company.

In October, the Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet, presented by Benson and Hedges, was the subject of a B.U.G.A. U.P. protest in Sydney and a M.O.P. U.P. protest in Melbourne. The protesters received strong support from ballet-goers, many of whom expressed their disgust at the cynicism of the tobacco company which dared to associate their anti-social industry with the splendour of cultural events like the ballet. In Sydney, donations for the B.U.G.A. U.P. Fighting Fund were received on the spot.

Outdoor ballet performances sponsored by Benson and Hedges are scheduled for the Sydney Domain on March 12, 1983 and the Myer Music Bowl on March 4.

## ASH ON THE ASHES

The director of the U.K. ASH (Action on Smoking and Health), David Simpson visited Australia recently to review the activities of various pro-health bodies in their fight against the tobacco industry.

His visit coincided with the Benson and Hedges "Battle for the Ashes" and the Western Australian parliament's attempt to ban tobacco advertising. At a press conference in Sydney, Mr. Simpson spoke at length about the political implications of the failed Bill, citing the courage of Dr. Dadour and his associates as an inspiration to health workers throughout the world. He said that it was typical of governments to consider a cricket match more important than public health, but there is a good chance that Australia will become the first English-speaking nation to take effective action against tobacco promotions.

When asked by a reporter what he thought of B.U.G.A. U.P.'s activities, he said that although he can't condone breaking the law, he was "very deeply moved by the concern and conviction of these people".

## ROTHMANS DISOWNS DUNHILL

Last year, Prince Charles was a special guest at the Dunhill Showjumping. Unfortunately for Rothmans (manufacturers of Dunhill cigarettes), Charles loathes smoking and refused to ride on a Dunhill saddlecloth. A Rothmans spokesman was reported in the press to say afterwards "It was all a mistake".

Fearing a repeat of this embarrassment at this year's showjumping which Prince Phillip would be opening, Rothmans toned down their peripheral advertising considerably and hoped that no-one would take them to task for their exploitation of royalty. Had they not plastered the city with Dunhill posters

promoting the event they may have gotten away with it, but as it happened they were attacked on all fronts.

The Non-Smokers' Movement of Australia set the ball rolling by sending a telegram to the Queen, saying that participation of the royal family in tobacco promotion was contributing to the death of 16,000 Australians each year. They requested that the royal family refuse any future invitations, as well as withdrawing Rothmans' right to use the phrase "by appointment to HM the Queen" on their packs.

The royal shit really hit the fan when Dr. Blum, the editor of the Medical Journal of Australia and the N.S.W. Cancer Council condemned Rothmans for "using" royalty to push their drugs. Rothmans responded by claiming that the showjumping was not sponsored by Dunhill the cigarette company, but by Alfred Dunhill the clothing retailer. The manager of Alfred Dunhill said that yes, he had heard of Dunhill cigarettes, but they had nothing to do with their sponsorship of the showjumping. He added, however, that he knew that Dr. Blum is a "known crusader against smoking and it would appear that he is trying to unfavourably involve the Royal Family and my company in his campaign".

Journalists who rang Alfred Dunhill's number to get details of the showjumping events were amused when they were told by an inadequately-primed receptionist to refer their questions to Rothmans.

Even the president of the Equestrian Federation made an ass of himself by saying that the Prince's participation in the showjumping had nothing to do with the promotion of cigarettes.

B.U.G.A. U.P. activists, who had staged a protest at last year's Benson and Hedges showjumping, fielded a team to picket and leaflet this year's event in Canberra.

The event was broadcast live in Canberra and replayed on channel 9 in Sydney the next day, so the protesters were kept well out of T.V. camera range by police. When the Prince turned to wave at them, the television commentator said: "land now the Prince is turning to wave at the crowd of loyal admirers who have braved the cold to greet him". Another fine example of "factual and accurate reporting" from the media which brought us hours of tobacco advertising through broadcasts like the Dunhill showjumping, Bathurst 1000 car races, Marlboro tennis, Rothmans football medal, Benson and Hedges cricket within the last few months.

## ONLY LIFE SENTENCE WILL DO

Fred Cole's case concerning the alleged "malicious injury to a billboard" on Newtown Station has finally been concluded in Newtown Magistrates Court.

The case had been adjourned four times due to the complexity of various arguments raised in Fred's defence, which hinged on the following three points:

- a) Absence of guilty intent at the time of the alleged offence. The graffitist honestly believed that what he did was morally justified.
- b) Lack of evidence that any damage had been done. The prosecution could not state precisely how the graffiti had damaged the advertisement. (Of course, the poster had actually been improved.)
- c) it was necessary to break the law in order to prevent serious suffering or injury.

After serious consideration of the arguments presented, the magistrate found Fred guilty. In his summing up, the magistrate indicated that although he was satisfied that advertising does cause people to smoke and smoking caused death and suffering, the defence of necessity could not be applied, because the

Defence had not shown that the graffiti would prevent such suffering.

In passing sentence, the magistrate said that it was his duty to impose a penalty which would deter the offender from repeating his crime, but it was difficult in this case because Fred had clearly not been deterred by his long list of prior convictions on similar charges. He intimated that a gaol sentence might be appropriate, although he didn't want to be the one to make a martyr of a graffitist. When asked if he had anything to say before sentence was passed, Fred said that nothing short of life imprisonment would deter him from repeating the "crime".

Serves the magistrate right for asking.

Fred was fined \$200, with no damages as the damage had not been quantified.

## FREEDOM OF CHOICE?

In defending their tobacco company sponsorship, sporting bodies use the argument that any restrictions on sponsorship are an attack on their freedom of choice, when in fact exactly the opposite is true. Their dependency on the drug-pushers' easy money has forced sporting administrators to continue to support their sponsors even if they don't approve of what they are pushing.

Now that the legal drug industry has bought out almost all Australian sports, sportsmen with a conscience have lost their freedom of choice.

This was illustrated perfectly this month when a motion was put to the annual meeting of the Confederation of Sport calling on it to dissociate itself from tobacco advertising. After 20 minutes of heated debate, it was decided not to even vote on the motion, as any decision made could be embarrassing.

## A HARD ACT TO SWALLOW

On November 26, the Local Government Act was amended to give councils greater power to control 'unauthorised' advertising posters. This move resulted from a report by the Outdoor Advertising Review Committee to the Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Eric Bedford, which concluded that unauthorised advertising for concerts and other "fly posters" were the greatest cause of visual vandalism.

Previously, people "postering" could only be prosecuted if they were caught in the act. The new amendment redefines an "advertiser" to include the person who caused the sign to be displayed. The Minister said that the cost of "getting the message across" might make postering uneconomical, leading to a reduction in the defacing of the city.

Of course, the real motivation for the crackdown is pressure from the "authorised" advertisers who are threatened by the availability of the cost free medium of fly-posting to those who would otherwise have to purchase their publicity from billboard companies, ad agencies, newspapers and other costly media.

Posters advertising concerts, rallies and similar community events are generally a lot less ugly than the giant billboards which assault us at every turn. They actually serve a useful purpose by conveying meaningful information about the advertised event, whereas the sole purpose of billboards is to imprint a brand name on the public's collective mind. The information presented by "unauthorised" posters is always current and factual, unlike "authorised" outdoor ads which go out of their way to be untimely and avoid any factual information such as where, when or how much.

If the government were really serious about acting in the public interest and preventing visual pollution, they would ban the use of public places for paid advertising and specify certain areas to

be used for posting information about coming events. Current billboard sites would be ideal places for this purpose.



## ABOUT B.U.G.A. U.P.

Now three years old, BUGA UP is an Australia wide protest movement dedicated to ending the promotion of unhealthy products, mainly the legal drugs. Billboards have been a prime target, as they are particularly offensive and readily accessible. The products pushed in these ads are often useless or positively harmful to our health, and in many cases advertisers play upon fears and insecurities to coerce us into giving them our money.

There is little control over the way advertisers behave, regulation being by means of "Voluntary Codes" which are supposedly enforced by the industry itself. In practice, this system offers no protection to the consumer, the industry's only interest being prevention of one advertiser being "disparaged" by another.

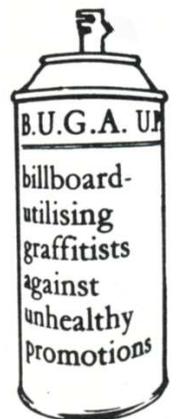
BUGA UP is not a group with a defined charter or organisational structure. "Membership" is gained automatically by anyone who speaks out, in whatever way they see fit, against advertisements, sponsorships or other manipulative techniques used to sell harmful products or promote destructive behaviour.

You can help by launching you own protest or sending a donation to B.U.G.A. U.P. at:

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