

# BUGA UP should BUZZ OFF, says Rothmans

By DENNY GROTH

THE BUGA UP campaign to deface cigarette and alcohol billboard advertisements is rankling the tobacco multinational Rothmans of Pall Mall (Australia) Ltd.

"And you get some government officers praising them for what they're doing," chairman Sir Ronald Irish said on Friday following the company's annual meeting.

He said he was referring to remarks made by Health Department officials.

BUGA UP stands for Billboard Utilising Graffitiists Against Unhealthy Promotion.

Rothman's chief executive director, Mr Vernon A. Brink, added: "I am very surprised at the mileage some of the media has given it."

Sir Ronald told shareholders: "No one could fail to note the continuous attacks on various industries, designed to undermine their viability. The tobacco industry is only one among a quite substantial list.

The nature of some of these attacks should be disturbing to every serious-minded person.

"The right to freedom has been hard-earned — many parts of the world do not enjoy it. Here in Australia we live in a free and democratic society.

As consumers of various products we should be free to make up our own minds about those which give us pleasure or satisfaction, provided they are legal."

Sir Ronald said the liquor industry also bore attacks. "There is hardly anything we are involved in that people don't say, 'its bad for you,' he added.

But Sir Ronald did not in-

## Advertising

clude all anti-smoking groups in his retaliation. "I do not object if their methods are ethical, their arguments judicious and soundly based, he said.

He objected to those who use "force or extreme forms of irresponsible and even illegal action."

They are, in any case, operating from a "wrong

premises, as far as he is concerned. "The relative incidence of cancer has gone down even though smoking has gone up, he said.

Mr Brink said the Tobacco Research Foundation, funded by the three tobacco groups in Australia, had given \$2.6 million to institutes, hospitals and universities over 10 years.