

'Bounty hunter' Lachlann seeks to bring about justice

(By Louise Eddy)

Lachlann Partridge, one of the leaders of the infamous BUGA UP group, was in Bathurst over the weekend to carry out 'a peaceful reconnaissance mission'.

Mr Partridge, a former Bathurst man, has returned to the city on behalf of BUGA UP, for a diplomatic visit to check out our billboard situation, especially in relation to the James Hardie 1000.

BUGA UP (Billboard Utilizing Graffitiists Against Unhealthy Promotions) has gained fame in Sydney as a result of its witty fight against the promotion of cigarettes and alcohol on billboards.

It uses spray cans to change the advertising slogans on these billboards.

For example, under a billboard ad for a well known type of lager beer, they have written the words 'for a larger gut'.

"We don't have anything against people smoking and drinking, but we do believe this sort of billboard advertising is encouraging children to smoke and drink by promoting a false glamor," Mr Partridge said.

"We write on billboards because the legal channels don't work."

Meanwhile, Mr Partridge, who insists he is a retired bagpipe player, attracted a great deal of attention in Bathurst with his paint covered car.

While on a recent visit to his grandmother, his car was spray painted with black 'scribble'.

Mr Partridge retaliated by writing anti-drug slogans over the top.

"The situation in Bathurst is not too bad, so I didn't have to resort to graffiti warfare, but there may be some need for direct action at a later date."

Mr Partridge said that in Sydney most people are supportive and sympathetic.

"Most people feel the way that we do — that advertising should be responsible.

"There are those who think that most of our support comes from groups of radical students, however this is not the case.

"The majority of our support comes from medical groups and doctors who realise that unless the advertisers lose some of their power, there is nothing they can do.

"They've issued health warnings, but the advertisers can undo this in about five minutes."

BUGA UP, which is also made up of public servants, teachers and company managers as well as some students, does not only write on billboards.

It has also staged some well publicised protests in Sydney, including one where a member chained himself to an item in an art exhibition sponsored by a cigarette company.

"We are also against

commercial exploitation of the arts.

Mr Partridge said that although the cigarette and alcohol companies sponsor a great deal of sport, generally the people they sponsor get a

raw deal, and can do better by seeking sponsorship elsewhere.

He said he feels that about 50 per cent of the money goes into blowing their own trumpet.

"We are also against

sexist advertising that promotes women as props to sell a product, or show them in degrading ways.

"Another reason I have returned to Bathurst is to make country

people aware of what's happening elsewhere.

"Country people tend to be left out of issues that affect them as much as it would someone in the city."



Graffiti activist, Lachlann Partridge is pictured with his paint covered car in Bathurst at the weekend. Lachlann describes himself as a 'bounty hunter dedicated to bringing the Marlboro man to justice'.

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