

BILLBORED

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

NUMBER 6, MAY 1983

PRICE
20 cents

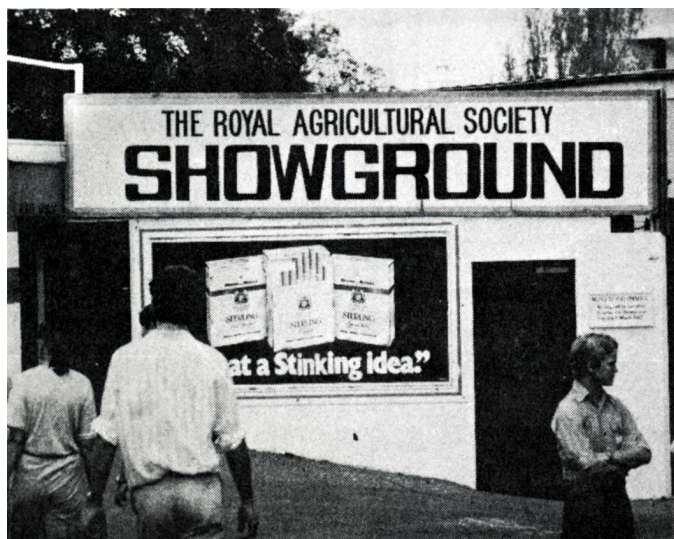


DRUG PUSHERS TAKE OVER KIDS' SHOW

The legal drug pushers have taken over the Royal Easter Show. A survey conducted by the Australian Consumers' Association when the Show opened on Friday 25th March revealed 779 cigarette ads and 66 beer ads 'about 31 ads per hectare. The dramatic increase in the number of cigarette promotions since last year was particularly conspicuous. Advertising posters ranging from small panels to giant billboards, have been plastered over every available surface. Ads line the perimeter of the main arena, the clock tower and the scoreboard, and even children's rides. The terminals of the two chairlifts which run the length of the Showground are painted to look like giant sterling packs, and each of the cabins in which the children ride are painted silver and have sterling logos on five sides.

The display of marlboro racing cars certainly attracted the kids. They could even buy marlboro ads to take home with them; marlboro T-shirts and caps in children's sizes, and posters for their bedroom walls. Young women with big smiles wandered around the Show handing out free samples of marlboro, stuyvesant and rothmans- the only free thing available at the Show.

The advertisements were scattered among the amusements, pavilions and sideshows in an attempt to associate smoking with fun and games.



This type of advertising constitutes yet another serious abuse of the Voluntary Codes regulating the advertising of alcohol and

cigarettes, which say that such ads must not be of "major appeal to children".

There can be no doubt that the Royal Easter Show is an event of primary appeal to children. To quote from the Royal Agricultural Society's own literature:

"The Royal Easter Show has always been a family show... Its a fun show for kids with subtle educational undertones... The kids go to the Show in their tens of thousands over the Easter holiday weekend".

Although most of the ads displayed are identical to those found on posters across the country, the context in which they are placed at the Show obviously heightens their appeal to impressionable young minds. The sheer volume of beer and cigarette advertising at the Show cannot be interpreted as anything other than a deliberate attempt to induce children to consume these products. It is hard to accept that this appeal to children is accidental- the Sterling chairlift ride even bears a notice "Children under 5 free".

The N.S.W. Parents and Citizens' Association was outraged by this overt attempt to undermine the educational efforts of teachers and parents. The Federation President, Mr. Paul Jeremy was quoted in the Sun Herald as saying "Advertising standards prohibit the advertising of these products to children, yet the Show, which is a major attraction to children, could almost be renamed the Royal Tobacco Show".

The Australian Consumers' Association held a press conference on the lawn of the rothmans theatre. While smiling 'Move Up* girls handed out cigarettes inside the theatre, A.C.A. councillor Paul Stein told the press "We are calling on the tobacco Industry to remove all tobacco advertisements from the Showground before Children's Day as a belated sign of good faith that it is genuine in its claim that It does not want to influence children to smoke."

The Marketing Manager of the R.A.S., Mr. Kelth Lewis, said nothing would be done about the ads. Mr. Stein said that this illustrated that the industry's self-regulatory code was an abject failure.



Amatil brandnames dominated the Show. Of the total 779 cigarette ads, 717 were for sterling and Benson and Hedges.

R.A.S. ASHAMED

Last month, B.U.G.A. U.P. received a letter from a Sydney BUG, telling an almost incredible story about his day at the show. He told of an adventure he and a friend had had at the Show.

"We had read in the paper that the P&C association had complained about the amount of cigarette advertising at the Show, and figured that it must be pretty serious for them to complain. So we thought we'd go on a fact-finding tour.

When we got there, we decided to check out the drug pushing at Rothmans Theatre.

As it happened, Channel 7 were there, interviewing someone from the A.C.A. who was also complaining about the cigarette ads (which really were incredible). John and I watched the press conference, and noticed that there was a girl in a blue and white uniform handing out Rothmans cigarettes inside the theatre. I had brought a cassette recorder with me and John had his 8mm movie camera, so we thought we would see what she had to say about her job. I went up to her with the microphone, and asked her how she feels about handing out cigarettes at a children's show. She said "You can't expect me to answer that" and went to hide behind a security guard."

Next we went around the grounds filming the cigarette ads and interviewing children who were smoking, asking them what they thought of the ads. After a while, we got heaved by two gorillas from the R.A.S. who told us that we weren't allowed to film without "authority". They accused us of being members of B.U.G.A. U.P., because we were photographing the cigarette ads (we weren't even carrying spray cans!). Next we went to the office and spoke to the manager, who was very edgy and paranoid. He told us that we were to desist from our nefarious purposes, and even called in the head of security and a detective from the C.I.B. to flex their muscles. We were told that it is against the regulations of the R.A.S. to take photos without authority, and that we would not be given authority, and if we continued filming they would confiscate our camera and throw us bodily off the grounds. I asked why the T.V. news were allowed to film without authority, and Mr. Arnold replied "They give us good publicity". I'm sure he changed his mind after what Channel 7 ran the next night!

The interesting part of all this is that they were so worried about a couple of amateurs "exposing" their drug-pushing. They obviously have a very guilty conscience, considering they claim not to be doing anything wrong."

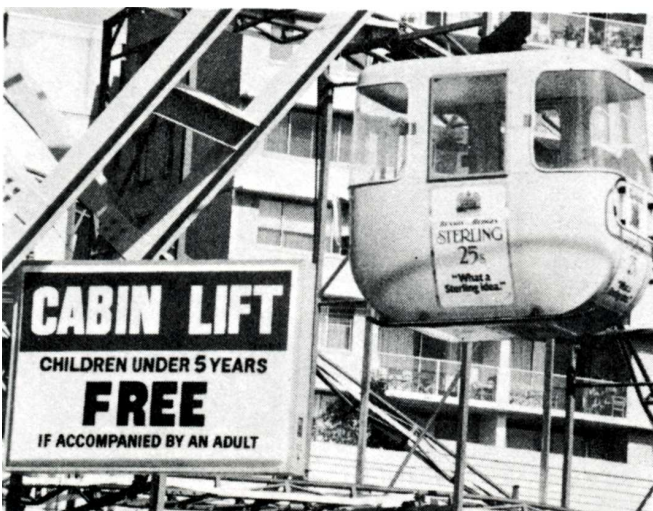


THE SPONSORSHIP DEAL OF THE CENTURY?



"LEGAL DRUG PUSHERS NEED NEW CUSTOMERS" and "IS YOUR CHILD HOOKED YET?"

These billboards outside the Easter Show were "adorned" on Wednesday night. The R.A.S. had removed the graffiti by 9 a.m. the next morning.



One of five cars comprising the marlbورو Precision Driving Team which performed death-defying acts in the main arena.

GOVT. STILL IN DRUG PUSHERS' POCKET

The national conference of health ministers held in Hobart last month was yet another chapter in the saga of the government's sell-out of public health in favour of the legal drug lobby.

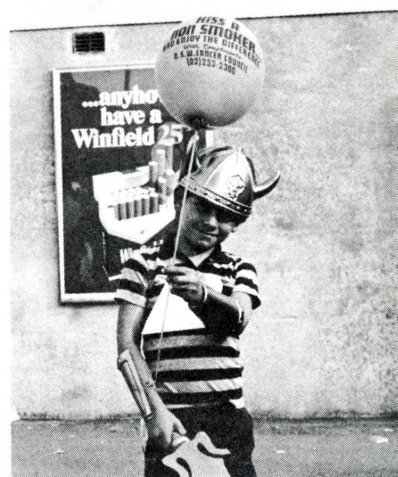
The new Federal Health Minister, Dr. Blewett, said: "I am disquieted by the obvious association [between tobacco companies and sport] because it influences the most susceptible group - and that is young people". But in spite of this "disquiet" he hastened to add that "Something like \$10 million a year comes from tobacco companies to sport by way of sponsorship, so obviously we have to consider that and try to come to the best decision for the community".

The highlight of the conference was a protest by 250 doctors who marched through the streets of Hobart waving placards demanding an end to all forms of cigarette advertising. Mr. Blewett listened patiently while they presented 6 petitions, and then announced that he would be investigating ways of ending circumvention of the electronic media ban by sponsorship. He foreshadowed other radical moves, such as an increase on tobacco excise and further public education programmes.

The voluntary code covering tobacco advertising will also be made stricter. A new draft code has been presented to the tobacco industry for their approval. Continuing his firm stand, Mr. Blewett said "We recognise it is a matter for negotiation with the tobacco companies and we are hopeful the negotiations will continue and produce results."

Presumably Mr. Blewett would also like to negotiate with murderers to make sure the government doesn't interfere with their right to kill, and consult rapists about any proposed changes to the law on rape.

IS LITE



Government sponsored health promotions must have the tobacco industry quaking in their boots.

ROYAL FAMILY "USED" BY DRUG PUSHERS

The Royal Family have once again been used by the legal drug pushers to promote their product.

During the first week of the recent visit by Charles and Di, newspapers across the country ran full co 1 our photos of the f mily on their front page, accompanied by ads for benson and hedges. The Royal photographs featured predominantly gold colouring, which matched (just by accident) the gold tones of the ads.

A Sydney BUG wrote a letter to the Governor General, Sir Ninian Stephen, complaining on behalf of B.U.G.A. U.P. about this cynical exploitation of royalty. His letter said that he was "particularly surprised that Prince Charles, well known for his anti-smoking views, would allow the Royal Family to be exploited in this shameful manner".

The Governor General replied that his investigation had revealed that "So far as the newspapers were concerned, the matter is simply a routine commercial transaction between themselves and an advertiser, and the Royal family itself was not involved".

Whether they like it or not, the Royal family was involved. The English newspapers were quick to recognise this scandal. The Observer reproduced the ads as they appeared in the Sydney papers, and quoted the director of ASH as saying "This is utterly disgraceful. it is glaringly obvious that they have tried to associate their wretched product with the Royal family." He said it was in particularly poor taste as the last four kings had died of smoking related diseases. He had sent a copy of the ads to Buckingham Palace.

The Daily Mail said "Critics are incensed because of the Prince's abhorrence of cigarette smoking. He won't tolerate it in his presence and there are no ashtrays in his car."

B.U.G.A. U.P. wasted no time launching a counter promotion. Two days after the ad appeared, they released their own version, which is a reproduction of the front page of the Sydney Morning Herald, suitably 're-faced'. The Royals have cigarettes hanging out of their mouths, and blank speech bubbles have been added. The poster is captioned "WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ROYALS ARE SAYING? Is this an example of the 'Peer' pressure that advertisers claim causes children to smoke?". The reader is invited to practice their graffiti by filling in the bubbles with appropriate captions.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"We hide our commitment to social responsibility under the bush of shyness, to our own detriment.. [the government] did not always appreciate the care, sincerity and objectivity which the advertising industry brings to administering its affairs."

- Mr. Peter Dunstan, Federal President, AANA



The posters are available from B.U.G.A. U.P. for 50 cents each



NO MORE AIRPORT DRUG DEALING

The Minister for Aviation, Mr. Kim Beazley, has decided to ban advertising of cigarettes at Australian Airports. He said that although the Government has a policy of banning cigarette advertising on property under Commonwealth control, "some brand advertising does still exist at some airports". The ban does not extend to advertisements by corporations involved in tobacco products (such as the house of dunhill), and the fact that "some tobacco advertisements still appear in some terminals is due to a misunderstanding by the concessionaire regarding the fact that display of brand names was not permitted."

The announcement of tougher control follows complaints from many health agencies including the A.M.A., M.O.P. U.P., the Non-smokers' Movement of Australia, the Health Commission, Heart Foundation, Cancer Council and the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation.

The Minister for Aviation is to be congratulated for acting on the recommendation of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare which said six years ago that the Commonwealth Government should ban all tobacco advertising. Maybe the legal drug industry doesn't have as much control over the new government as the last one.

TREE VANDALISM BY AUST. POSTERS

Last year, Sydney Council constructed a small recreational park on the corner of Greens Road and Moore Park Road, Moore Park. Several trees were planted, and grew happily until they reached above the height of the billboards on the wall behind. And then they were struck by a mystery disease known in the trade as "billboarditis". This disease is apparently caused by close proximity to a billboard. The symptom is that the top of the tree falls off, at the exact height of the billboard. Tree specialists are especially baffled by the way the wound resembles a sawcut.

Puzzled by this phenomenon, a local resident wrote to the council in January complaining about their neglect of these trees. The council replied that they are aware that the trees had been pruned level with the billboards and that "This unauthorised Interference and mutilation of the trees was carried out without the Council's knowledge or approval." The billboards (one tobacco, one alcohol) belong to Australian Posters, and the Council concluded that "to prevent a recurrence of the interference with the trees in question, negotiations are taking place with the people concerned with a view to having the billboards phased out".

THE FAMILY THAT SPRAYS TOGETHER...

A Professor of Education at Newcastle University and his 14 year-old son have been charged with maliciously injuring several cigarette billboards in the Newcastle area.

Professor Theodore McDonald appeared in the Newcastle Court of Petty sessions on 14th April. His son had already appeared in the Children's court, but the outcome is not known as this court is not open to the public.

It is alleged that Prof McDonald drove the car and his son did the "dirty work". He has entered a plea of not guilty. In an exclusive interview with Billboarded, he said:

"I have done research work in the field of children's cognitive processes which made me realise how tobacco advertising is designed to exploit the psychological susceptibilities of innocently unprepared people. Children know no psychology and are not aware of what is being done to them.

As a Christian concerned about my fellow human beings, I felt it necessary to do something about this. After much study, I decided that the approach of conventional anti-smoking agencies was totally ineffective in view of the sheer financial might of the tobacco advertisers. I was most impressed by the work of the people who cleverly alter the wording on cigarette billboards to make fun of the product. I decided that in the same way that advertising psychologists use subliminal devices, it would be enough to splash the ads untidily with paint. This would cause young people to associate decrepitude and filth with cigarettes.

My son was keen to help, and I could not have justified refusing to allow this. He is much more agile than I, so I just drove the car. I didn't actually see what he did at the time, but I believe the billboards concerned were much improved. I certainly don't believe there was any 'malicious injury' involved".

The case has been adjourned until July 1st.

THE ROTHMANS CONNECTION- PART 3


The N.S.W. Labor Party's Sport and Recreation Committee have turned against the Labor government's general disapproval of cigarette advertising. The decision to oppose any ban on sponsorship of sports by tobacco companies was made by five of the nine committee members who attended a meeting held wait for it - at the rothmans sports foundation offices in Sydney. Rothmans charged nothing for the use of the facilities or for the supper they laid on. A spokesman for rothmans said "Our facilities are available to any sports people. I haven't the faintest idea what they talked about."

GIANT AD SCREEN A STONETHROW AWAY

An electronic display screen capable of showing video material in broad daylight is planned for the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The screen will measure 70m by 12m. It will cost \$4.2 million to build and advertising revenue is expected to be \$1.5 million annually. Industry sources say that it is likely that Benson and Hedges will be a major sponsor.

B.U.G.A. U.P. researchers believe that the screen will use thousands of light bulbs to form the picture.



LET'S END UNHEALTHY PROMOTIONS

If you share B.U.G.A. U.P.'s concern about the promotion of legal drugs join our campaign or send a donation to the B.U.G.A. U.P. Fighting Fund.

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