

# Report of National Committee for Restriction of Outdoor Advertising.

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## ESTABLISHED

The National Committee for Restriction of Outdoor Advertising was formed in December, 1923.

A group of men and women, representing state and national organizations interested in the problems of restricting signboard advertising in order to save scenic beauty, decided to form an independent committee which could act as a clearing house for the work of all these organizations on this particular problem.

## POLICY

The policy of this committee is Restriction of signboard advertising, not Abolition.

We appreciate the value of advertising. If Business needs signboards, let us have signboards, but let them be RESTRICTED TO COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS WHERE THEY WILL NOT INJURE SCENIC OR CIVIC BEAUTY.

The natural beauty of our country is not only a public asset to be conserved; it is also a public right to be respected. No individual and no corporation has the right to despoil the natural scenic beauty of the land for his or its own private profit.

We stand for no rural boards, except on the place of business. In the towns and cities we stand for no signboards where they injure civic beauty or residential values.

## PLAN OF ACTION

Our plan of action is simple. We are trying to convince the advertiser that the public resents the signboards smeared across every landscape. The advertiser must have the good will of the people. Therefore, if we convince the advertiser that the public resents rural signboards, he will cease to use rural signboards.

We are doing two things: First, drawing out an expression of public opinion on this matter; and, second, carrying that expression directly to the advertiser.

During the past year we have poured literally thousands of protest letters upon the desks of many of the leading national advertisers. These letters have come from committees, clubs and individuals all over the country. We have also presented the work from the platform in towns and cities in fourteen states.

## RESULTS OF YEAR'S WORK

The general attitude of the public toward this matter has been effectively demonstrated by the spontaneous response which the movement has called forth all over the country.

More than fifty organizations are now cooperating in the work. Twelve of these are national organizations. Committees in fourteen states are actively at work on the Protest-by-Letter Campaign. Newspapers and magazines all over the country have given the movement favorable publicity.

Without question the Public is rapidly awakening to the fact that our country, one of the most beautiful in the world, is fast becoming the most commercialized. It is also recognizing that such commercialization is not necessary to Business, and is a district infringement upon the rights of the people.

The advertisers are responding to this expression of public opinion. Already twenty-one have endorsed the stand taken by the National Committee, and have agreed to the principle of restriction. These national advertisers, listed below, have not agreed to give up outdoor advertising. We have not asked them to do so. They have agreed, so far as possible, to restrict their outdoor advertising to commercial locations where it will not injure scenic or civic beauty, due allowance to be made for present contracts not yet expired.

Many other advertisers, not on this list, have expressed their general agreement with the principle of restriction.

There are many evidences that this public opinion campaign is already producing a very real check on rural signboards. It is also preparing the way for effective legislation in the future.

## OUTLOOK

There is no doubt that we are on the right path when we approach the advertiser. Previous campaigns to restrict signboards have yielded to the urgent invitation of the signboard companies to cooperate with them. The result has been an improvement in the boards, better kept and better designed boards, but no appreciable restriction. Outdoor advertising, it is claimed, has tripled since the war.

If we do not want signboards, however artistic (and many are the opposite) lining every rural highway, we must tell it to the advertiser, and we must speak in no uncertain terms.

The success of the movement depends upon its extent. We must register the opinion of the people from every section of the United States.

The extent of the movement depends upon your moral and financial support.

Will you add your voice and your influence to the demand that the natural beauty of our country be treated as a public asset, a national resource, to be conserved and guarded as carefully as we guard our material resources?