

SAVE THE BEAUTY OF AMERICA

THE LANDSCAPE IS NO PLACE FOR ADVERTISING

Paragraphs from address delivered at the Biennial of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Atlantic City, June 1926, by the Chairman of the General Federation Billboard Restriction Committee.

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Save the Landscape

The landscape is no place for advertising. The General Federation has stood for this policy for many years. Thirty large national advertisers have now endorsed this policy and have agreed to withdraw their signboards as rapidly as possible to commercial districts.

Natural Beauty a National Resource

We seek to conserve one of the greatest resources which our land possesses — its natural beauty.

The leading factor in the uglification of our cities and the commercializing of our landscapes has been the rapid growth and indiscriminate use of outdoor advertising.

We urge the restriction of all outdoor advertising to commercial districts. *The landscape is no place for advertising.*

Not Fighting Industry

We are not fighting the Billboard Industry. We are asking it to play in its own yard.

We recognize the economic value of the billboard, but we do not believe that that value warrants the destruction of the beauty of America.

No other country carries outdoor advertising to such excess as does America. No other country commercializes its landscapes as does America. We are becoming known to travelers, not as America the Beautiful, but as America the Cheap, the Commercial, the Ugly.

The billboard industry promises some reforms. We are grateful. But they still assume that our landscapes are their legitimate field for advertising. We disagree.

Landscape Property of People

We believe that the landscapes belong to the people. As the National Association of Real Estate Boards has phrased it: "Our scenery is a priceless public possession." Why then should we permit a comparatively small group to obtrude its specialized business into the whole American landscape?

The industry states that for business reasons it will remove the poster boards from all the rural landscapes. But this does not meet the situation. The painted boards deface our hills and meadows just as glaringly as do the poster boards. We want our landscapes neither posted nor painted.

The industry promises not to erect boards which obstruct a scenic view. But what about the woods and hills and meadows which are not scenic, but are just quietly lovely. Must all this be commercialized?

We want a chance to escape from the rush and turmoil and ugliness of our American cities into an open country which is not commercialized, where we may forget business, where we may feel the calm of spirit which only beauty brings. We want our landscapes free from commercial advertising.
