

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SESSION

PANEL DISCUSSION COOPERATIVE EFFORTS BETWEEN STATE CONSERVATION AGENCIES AND PRIVATE ENTER- PRISE IN THE PROMOTION OF CONSERVATION INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

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THE ADVERTISING COUNCIL, INC.

The Advertising Council, Inc. (then called the War Advertising Council), was formed in 1942. Acting on the principle that the best public relations advertising is public service advertising, American business sponsored the Council to help the war effort through public service advertisement using all media.

The Council was so successful with its wartime campaigns that American business decided to continue sponsorship of the Council after the war years. Now during peacetime—the Advertising Council is a private, non-profit group, which marshals the forces of advertising to secure public understanding and action on important national problems.

Advertisers, advertising agencies and all media of communications constitute the Council as a unit, provide funds for its operating budget and the skills for its campaigns. A Board of Directors, representing each of these elements, runs the Council, with the help of two special committees. The Industries Advisory Committee advises the Council on programs under consideration and helps raise its annual budget. The Public Policy Committee acts to assure that Council campaigns are genuinely in the public interest. All campaigns, except those in which the public interest has been clearly established by Act of Congress, must be approved first by the Board of Directors and then by a three-fourths vote of the Public Policy Committee.

Once a campaign is accepted, it is handled by a task force, consisting of a volunteer coordinator, appointed through the Association of National Advertisers; a volunteer advertising agency, chosen by the coordinator through the American Association of Advertising Agencies; and a staff executive and supervisor appointed by the Council. This group confers with the client on policy and facts, establishes theme and timing, requests media support and creates the advertising materials. All creative and advisory work is contributed by the coordinator and the agency as a public service. Out-of-pocket costs on each campaign are paid by the sponsoring organization.

Advertising materials are sent directly to the media which can best deliver the message. Council campaigns are carried free of charge each year in all media. The 1958-59 total of free advertising mustered for Council campaigns was about \$170 million.

In 1958-59, American business contributed advertising support to sixteen major Council campaigns and fifty-two other causes. With the mushrooming of fund-raising drives and the consequent demands made on all advertising media, business and advertising find it increasingly important that the Advertising Council apply its strict criteria in choosing among the many public service programs seeking advertising support.

Several hundred major campaigns and over a thousand other subjects which were given short term support have been sponsored by the Council. You may still remember the Victory Garden program, the Fat Salvage, the Confidence In A Growing America, The Action program, Armed Forces Prestige, Civil Defense and Ground Observer Corps. These are no longer Council campaigns as the problems have been solved. Some other solved problems which you probably have forgotten are Soil Conservation, a Council program to conserve fertile

soil through contour farming and strip cropping. "Women In The Service," a campaign to build prestige and popular acceptance for Women In The Service.

Of the many campaigns three stand out over the years. Savings Bond, Red Cross and Forest Fire Prevention. To discuss this last mentioned campaign we have Jay Grant, Assistant Director of the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign.

"THE SMOKEY BEAR STORY"

By JAY GRANT

Assistant Director

The Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program

A cooperative project conducted by the Association of State Foresters,
the U. S. Forest Service, the Advertising Council and
the Canadian Forestry Association

This is a story about a bear—a very special bear—perhaps the most famous bear of our time. It's the story of "Smokey," the forest fire preventin' bear. At the same time, it is a success story unparalleled in the annals of public-service advertising . . . a classic example of what Federal and State governments, industry, and individuals can accomplish, working together toward a common goal.

This story had its beginning in the years immediately preceding World War II. This country was experiencing an average of over 200,000 forest fires per year, and the curve was going up. Fires were blackening an average of 30 million acres every year. That is an area about the size of New York State. In 1941, the timber loss alone, from forest fires, was estimated at 55 million dollars. Enough timber burned that year to build homes for a city of 500,000 people. Foresters were preaching fire prevention but weren't reaching the masses. Their shots were too few and too scattered.

The early day posters were wordy and lacked eye appeal. There was no central theme—no symbol. They just weren't effective. The 1939 poster showing Uncle Sam proved to be the best pre-war effort. It was a forerunner to 1942 and all-out war. The armed forces were taking the best of our forest fire fighting manpower. Equipment for fighting fires was hard to obtain, or not available, and incendiary bombs were being dropped on West Coast forests. State and Federal foresters feared that a bad combination of weather, coupled with an outbreak of enemy-caused fires in the face of manpower and equipment shortages, might create a situation they could not handle. We needed to alert the public to prevent fires from happening, and since 9 out of every 10 fires are man-caused, an appeal to the public to prevent forest fires was needed.

Early in 1942, foresters took their problem to the then newly organized War Advertising Council, now called The Advertising Council, a non-profit, non-political organization, using the forces of advertising to help solve important Government and private problems of nationwide scope. The Council was quick to recognize the merit of fire prevention and readily agreed to sponsor a National Campaign to prevent forest fires. Soon forest fire prevention messages began to appear in newspapers, magazines, and on the radio.

It was only natural that the first poster used nationwide in 1942 should carry a wartime theme and show a menacing Jap face. It made people stop to think and become conscious of the important association between carelessness, forest fires, and the war effort. A similar theme was used in 1943 when Tojo and Hitler threatened America. The war effort was in full swing and the message was timely and well accepted.

In 1944, more radio messages, more newspaper items, and two posters proved quite popular. One was the so-called "Shouting Ranger" poster. This illustration was also used as the basis for the first fire prevention stamp. The other poster marked the first use of an animal character in the program—Walt Disney's Bambi. Bambi was well received by children and adults alike and bore out what the advertising business had long realized; animal characters, used in advertising, have a strong appeal. This poster prompted the Volunteer Task