

GHQ/SCAP Records(RG 331)
Description of contents

THE
NATIONAL ARCHIVES
OF THE
UNITED STATES

- (1) Box no. 2152
(2) Folder title/number: (8)
Transportation Corps

(3) Date: Mar. 1948

(4) Subject:

Classification	Type of record
631	e

(5) Item description and comment:

(6) Reproduction: Yes No

(7) Film no. _____ Sheet no. _____

COPY

Col Miller 26-6305

Billboard Nuisance

Chief, CTS

Chief, ESS
Chief, GS

29 March 1949

1. During recent visits to transportation facilities in various parts of Japan, I have noticed a beginning of the outdoor advertising billboard nuisance so common in the United States. The billboards in question are large structures, usually about 8 feet high and 20 or more feet long, and located, not in metropolitan areas on industrial or commercial property, but in rural areas adjacent to metropolitan communities and in places where they constitute a serious detraction to the scenery.
2. While this nuisance became noticeable a few months ago both in Honshu and Kyushu, a very substantial increase in these signs has been noted on the trip just completed. A typical example was near Shimazu where a group of six to eight of these signs has been built along the edge of a rather attractive small lake in such a manner as to definitely spoil the scenic effect. Adjacent to this group is another group under construction, 2 signs being erected but not painted as yet. A short distance farther along a similar advertising sign - for shoe polish - is erected in front of a very attractive Shinto shrine in such a manner as to partially conceal the Torii.
3. Unless prompt action is taken now by SCAP, to insure national legislation prohibiting this practice, there is danger of a vested interest being built up before legislation will be possible in subsequent sessions of the Diet. ESS is interested because of its concern with the tourist traffic and it is believed that Govt Section is interested in like manner. It should be noted that these signs are being constructed in the areas that attract the heaviest traffic - i.e. - the main railroad and highway lines south and west of the Tokyo-Yokohama area on Honshu and similar areas in northern Kyushu from Moji to Beppo.
4. It is suggested that the proper action would be to advise the Japanese Government to enact legislation similar to the model laws now on the books of several states of the U.S. - laws to the effect that outdoor advertising involving displays of over 10 square feet is prohibited except on real property whose products are the subject of the advertising matter involved.

----- H.T.M. -----