

Complaint

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IN THE MATTER OF

SCHIMMEL FUR COMPANY ET AL.

CONSENT ORDER, ETC., IN REGARD TO THE ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION AND THE FUR PRODUCTS LABELING ACTS

Docket C-811. Complaint, Aug. 14, 1964—Decision, Aug. 14, 1964

Consent order requiring manufacturing furriers in St. Louis, Mo., to cease misbranding, falsely advertising, and deceptively invoicing their fur products.

COMPLAINT

Pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act and the Fur Products Labeling Act and by virtue of the authority vested in it by said Acts, the Federal Trade Commission having reason to believe that Schimmel Fur Company, a corporation, and Morris J. Schimmel, individually and as an officer of said corporation, hereinafter referred to as respondents, have violated the provisions of said Acts and the Rules and Regulations promulgated under the Fur Products Labeling Act, and it appearing to the Commission that a proceeding by it in respect thereof would be in the public interest, hereby issues its complaint stating its charges in that respect as follows:

PARAGRAPH 1. Respondent Schimmel Fur Company is a corporation organized, existing and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Missouri.

Respondent Morris Schimmel is an officer of the corporate respondent and formulates, directs and controls the acts, practices and policies of the said corporate respondent including those hereinafter set forth.

Respondents are manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers of fur products with their office and principal place of business located at 1103 Washington Avenue, city of St. Louis, State of Missouri.

PAR. 2. Subsequent to the effective date of the Fur Products Labeling Act on August 9, 1952, respondents have been and are now engaged in the introduction into commerce, and in the manufacture for introduction into commerce, and in the sale, advertising, and offering for sale in commerce, and in the transportation and distribution in commerce, of fur products: and have manufactured for sale, sold, advertised, offered for sale, transported and distributed fur products which have been made in whole or in part of furs which have been shipped and received in commerce, as the terms "commerce," "fur" and "fur product" are defined in the Fur Products Labeling Act.

PAR. 3. Certain of said fur products were misbranded in violation of Section 4(1) of the Fur Products Labeling Act in that they were falsely and deceptively labeled or otherwise falsely and deceptively identified in that labels affixed to fur products, contained representations, either directly or by implication that the prices of such fur products were reduced from respondents former prices and the amount of such purported reduction constituted savings to purchasers of respondents' fur products. In truth and in fact, the alleged former prices were fictitious in that they were not actual, bona fide prices at which respondents offered the products to the public on a regular basis for a reasonably substantial period of time in the recent regular course of business and the said fur products were not reduced in price as represented and savings were not afforded purchasers of respondents' said fur products, as represented.

PAR. 4. Certain of said fur products were falsely and deceptively invoiced by the respondents in that they were not invoiced as required by Section 5(b)(1) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated under such Act.

Among such falsely and deceptively invoiced fur products, but not limited thereto, were fur products covered by invoices which failed:

1. To show the true animal name of the fur used in the fur product.
2. To disclose that the fur contained in the fur product was bleached, dyed, or otherwise artificially colored, when such was the fact.
3. To show the country of origin of imported furs used in fur products.

PAR. 5. Certain of said fur products were falsely and deceptively invoiced in violation of the Fur Products Labeling Act in that they were not invoiced in accordance with the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder in the following respects:

(a) Information required under Section 5(b)(1) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder was set forth on invoices in abbreviated form, in violation of Rule 4 of said Rules and Regulations.

(b) The term "Persian Lamb" was not set forth on invoices in the manner required by law, in violation of Rule 8 of said Rules and Regulations.

(c) The term "Dyed Broadtail-processed Lamb" was not set forth on invoices in the manner required by law, in violation of Rule 10 of said Rules and Regulations.

(d) The term "natural" was not used on invoices to describe fur products which were not pointed, bleached, dyed, tip-dyed or otherwise

artificially colored, in violation of Rule 19(g) of said Rules and Regulations.

PAR. 6. Certain of said fur products were falsely and deceptively invoiced with respect to the name or designation of the animal or animals that produced the fur from which the said fur products had been manufactured, in violation of Section 5(b) (2) of the Fur Products Labeling Act.

Among such falsely and deceptively invoiced fur products, but not limited thereto, were fur products which were invoiced as "Broadtail" thereby implying that the furs contained therein were entitled to the designation "Broadtail Lamb" when in truth and in fact they were not entitled to such designations.

PAR. 7. Certain of said fur products were falsely and deceptively advertised in violation of the Fur Products Labeling Act in that certain advertisements intended to aid, promote and assist, directly or indirectly, in the sale and offering for sale of such fur products were not in accordance with the provisions of Section 5(a) of the said Act.

Among and included in the aforesaid advertisements but not limited thereto, were advertisements of respondents which appeared in issues of the Nashville Tennessean, a newspaper published in the city of Nashville, State of Tennessee.

Among such false and deceptive advertisement, but not limited thereto, were advertisements which failed:

1. To show the true animal name of the fur used in the fur product.
2. To show the country of origin of imported furs contained in fur products.

PAR. 8. By means of the aforesaid advertisements and others of similar import and meaning not specifically referred to herein, respondents falsely and deceptively advertised fur products in violation of Section 5(a) (5) of the Fur Products Labeling Act by featuring the term "Broadtail" in large conspicuous print while the correct description "Dyed Broadtail-processed Lamb" is set forth in less conspicuous print. By means of the aforesaid practices respondents implied that such products are entitled to the designation "Broadtail Lamb" when in truth and in fact they are not entitled to such designation.

PAR. 9. By means of the aforesaid advertisements and others of similar import and meaning not specifically referred to herein, respondents falsely and deceptively advertised fur products in violation of the Fur Products Labeling Act in that the said fur products were

not advertised in accordance with the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder in the following respects:

(a) The term "Persian Lamb" was not set forth in the manner required, in violation of Rule 8 of the said Rules and Regulations.

(b) The term "Dyed Broadtail-processed Lamb" was not set forth in the manner required, in violation of Rule 10 of the said Rules and Regulations.

(c) The term "natural" was not used to describe fur products which were not pointed, bleached, dyed, tip-dyed or otherwise artificially colored, in violation of Rule 19(g) of the said Rules and Regulations.

(d) All parts of the information required under Section 5(a) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder were not set forth in type of equal size and conspicuousness and in close proximity with each other, in violation of Rule 38(a) of the aforesaid Rules and Regulations.

PAR. 10. By means of the aforesaid advertisements and other advertisements of similar import and meaning, not specifically referred to herein, respondents falsely and deceptively advertised fur products in that said advertisements represented that the prices of fur products were reduced from respondents former prices and that the amount of such price reductions afforded savings to the purchasers of respondents' fur products. In truth and in fact, the alleged former prices were fictitious in that they were not actual, bona fide prices at which respondents offered the fur products to the public on a regular basis for a reasonably substantial period of time in the recent regular course of business and the said fur products were not reduced in price as represented and the represented savings were not thereby afforded to the purchasers, in violation of Section 5(a) (5) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and Rule 44(a) of the Rules and Regulations promulgated under the said Act.

PAR. 11. Respondents falsely and deceptively advertised fur products by affixing labels thereto which represented either directly or by implication that prices of such fur products were reduced from respondents former prices and the purported reductions constituted savings to purchasers of respondents' fur products. In truth and in fact, the alleged former prices were fictitious in that they were not the actual, bona fide prices at which respondents offered the fur products to the public on a regular basis for a reasonably substantial period of time in the recent regular course of business and the said fur products were not reduced in price as represented and the represented savings were not thereby afforded to purchasers, in violation of Section 5(a) (5)

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of the Fur Products Labeling Act and Rule 44(a) of the Rules and Regulations.

PAR. 12. In advertising fur products for sale as aforesaid respondents represented through such statements as "our entire fur inventory, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % off" that prices of fur products were reduced in direct proportion to the percentages stated and that the amount of said reduction afforded savings to the purchasers of respondents' products when in fact such prices were not reduced in direct proportion to the percentages stated and the represented savings were not thereby afforded to the said purchasers, in violation of Section 5(a)(5) of the Fur Products Labeling Act.

PAR. 13. By means of the aforesaid advertisements and others of similar import and meaning not specifically referred to herein respondents falsely and deceptively advertised fur products in that said advertisements used comparative prices which failed to give a designated time of a bona fide compared price, in violation of Section 5(a)(5) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and Rule 44(b) of the Rules and Regulations promulgated under the said Act.

PAR. 14. In advertising fur products for sale, as aforesaid, respondents made pricing claims and representations of the types covered by subsections (a), (b), (c) and (d) of Rule 44 of the Regulations under the Fur Products Labeling Act. Respondents in making such claims and representations failed to maintain full and adequate records disclosing the facts upon which such pricing claims and representations were based, in violation of Rule 44(e) of the said Rules and Regulations.

PAR. 15. The aforesaid acts and practices of respondents, as herein alleged, are in violation of the Fur Products Labeling Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder and constitute unfair and deceptive acts and practices and unfair methods of competition in commerce under the Federal Trade Commission Act.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Commission having heretofore determined to issue its complaint charging the respondents named in the caption hereof with violation of the Federal Trade Commission Act and the Fur Products Labeling Act, and the respondents having been served with notice of said determination and with a copy of the complaint the Commission intended to issue, together with a proposed form of order; and

The respondents and counsel for the Commission having thereafter executed an agreement containing a consent order, an admission by respondents of all the jurisdictional facts set forth in the complaint

to issue herein, a statement that the signing of said agreement is for settlement purposes only and does not constitute an admission by respondents that the law has been violated as set forth in such complaint, and waivers and provisions as required by the Commission's rules; and

The Commission, having considered the agreement, hereby accepts same, issues its complaint in the form contemplated by said agreement, makes the following jurisdictional findings, and enters the following order:

1. Respondent Schimmel Fur Company is a corporation organized, existing and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Missouri with its office and principal place of business located at 1103 Washington Avenue, city of St. Louis, State of Missouri.

Respondent Morris J. Schimmel is an officer of the corporate respondent and his address is the same as that of the corporate respondent.

2. The Federal Trade Commission has jurisdiction of the subject matter of this proceeding and of the respondents, and the proceeding is in the public interest.

ORDER

It is ordered, That respondent Schimmel Fur Company, a corporation, and its officers, and Morris J. Schimmel, individually and as an officer of said corporation, and respondents' representatives, agents and employees, directly or through any corporate or other device, in connection with the introduction, or manufacture for introduction, into commerce, or the sale, advertising or offering for sale in commerce, or the transportation or distribution in commerce, of any fur product; or in connection with the manufacture for sale, sale, advertising, offering for sale, transportation or distribution, of any fur product which is made in whole or in part of fur which has been shipped and received in commerce; as the terms "commerce," "fur" and "fur product" are defined in the Fur Products Labeling Act, do forthwith cease and desist from:

A. Misbranding fur products by:

1. Representing, directly or by implication on labels, that any price, when accompanied or not by descriptive terminology is the respondents' former price of fur products when such amount is in excess of the actual, bona fide price at which respondents offered the fur products to the public on a regular basis for a reasonably substantial period of time in the recent regular course of business.

2. Misrepresenting in any manner on labels or other means of identification the savings available to purchasers of respondents' products.

3. Falsely or deceptively representing in any manner, directly or by implication, on labels or other means of identification that prices of respondents' fur products are reduced.

B. Falsely or deceptively invoicing fur products by:

1. Failing to furnish invoices to purchasers of fur products showing in words and figures plainly legible all the information required to be disclosed in each of the subsections of Section 5(b)(1) of the Fur Products Labeling Act.

2. Setting forth on invoices pertaining to fur products any false or deceptive information with respect to the name or designation of the animal or animals that produced the fur contained in such fur product.

3. Setting forth information required under Section 5(b)(1) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder in abbreviated form.

4. Failing to set forth the term "Persian Lamb" in the manner required where an election is made to use that term instead of the word "Lamb."

5. Failing to set forth the term "Dyed Broadtail-processed Lamb" in the manner required where an election is made to use that term instead of the words "Dyed Lamb."

6. Failing to set forth the term "Natural" as part of the information required to be disclosed on invoices under the Fur Products Labeling Act and Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder to describe fur products which are not pointed, bleached, dyed, tip-dyed or otherwise artificially colored.

C. Falsely or deceptively advertising fur products through the use of any advertisement, representation, public announcement or notice which is intended to aid, promote or assist, directly or indirectly, in the sale, or offering for sale of any fur product, and which:

1. Fails to set forth in words and figures plainly legible all the information required to be disclosed by each of the subsections of Section 5(a) of the Fur Products Labeling Act.

2. Falsely or deceptively identifies any such fur product as to the name or designation of the animal or animals that produced the fur contained in the fur product.

3. Fails to set forth the term "Persian Lamb" in the manner required where an election is made to use that term instead of the word "Lamb."

4. Fails to set forth the term "Dyed Broadtail-processed Lamb" in the manner required where an election is made to use that term instead of the words "Dyed Lamb."

5. Fails to set forth the term "Natural" as part of the information required to be disclosed in advertisements under the Fur Products Labeling Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder to describe fur products which are not pointed, bleached, dyed, tip-dyed or otherwise artificially colored.

6. Fails to set forth all parts of the information required under Section 5(a) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder in type of equal size and conspicuousness and in close proximity with each other.

7. Represents directly or by implication, that any price, when accompanied or not by descriptive terminology is the respondents' former price of fur products when such amount is in excess of the actual, bona fide price at which respondents offered the fur products to the public on a regular basis for a reasonably substantial period of time in the recent regular course of business.

8. Misrepresents in any manner the savings available to purchasers or respondents' fur products.

9. Falsely or deceptively represents in any manner that prices of respondents' fur products are reduced.

10. Represents directly or by implication through percentage savings claims that prices of fur products are reduced to afford purchasers of respondents' fur products the percentage of savings stated when the prices of such fur products are not reduced to afford to purchasers the percentage of savings stated.

11. Makes use of comparative prices of any fur products unless a bona fide compared price at a designated time is given, unless such compared prices are actual, bona fide prices at which respondents offered the fur products to the public on a regular basis for a reasonably substantial period of time in the recent regular course of business.

D. Making claims and representations of the types covered by subsections (a), (b), (c) and (d) of Rule 44 of the Rules and

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Regulations promulgated under the Fur Products Labeling Act unless there are maintained by respondents full and adequate records disclosing the facts upon which such claims and representations are based.

It is further ordered, That the respondents herein shall, within sixty (60) days after service upon them of this order, file with the Commis-