

Complaint

IN THE MATTER OF

COLBERT'S

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

Docket C-1145. Complaint, Dec. 9, 1966—Decision, Dec. 9, 1966

Consent order requiring a Dallas, Texas, retail furrier to cease misbranding,
deceptively invoicing and falsely advertising its 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 Colbert's, a corporation, hereinafter referred to as respondent, has 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 Colbert's is a corporation organized, existing and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Texas.

Respondent is a retailer of fur products with its office and principal place of business located at 221 Centre Street, city of Dallas, State of Texas.

PAR. 2. Subsequent to the effective date of the Fur Products Labeling Act on August 9, 1952, respondent has been and is now engaged in the 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 has 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, con-

tained representations, either directly or by implication, that the prices of such fur products were reduced from respondent's former prices and the amount of such purported reduction constituted savings to purchasers of respondent's fur products. In truth and in fact, the alleged former prices were fictitious in that they were not actual bona fide prices at which respondent 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 respondent's said fur products, as represented.

PAR. 4. Certain of said fur products were misbranded in that they were not labeled as required under the provisions of Section 4(2) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and in the manner and form prescribed by the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder.

Among such misbranded fur products, but not limited thereunder, were fur products with labels which failed to show the true animal name of the fur used in any such fur product.

PAR. 5. Certain of said fur products were misbranded in violation of the Fur Products Labeling Act in that they were not labeled in accordance with the Rules and Regulations promulgated thereunder inasmuch as required item numbers were not set forth on labels, in violation of Rule 40 of said Rules and Regulations.

PAR. 6. Certain of said fur products were falsely and deceptively invoiced by the respondent 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 any such fur product.
2. To disclose that the fur contained in the fur products 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. 7. 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 the furs contained therein were not entitled to such designation.

PAR. 8. 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) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) Required item numbers were not set forth on invoices, in violation of Rule 40 of said Rules and Regulations.

PAR. 9. 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 respondent which appeared in issues of the Valley Evening Monitor, a newspaper published in the city of McAllen, State of Texas.

Among such false and deceptive advertisements, but not limited thereto, were advertisements which failed to show the true animal name of the fur used in any such fur product.

PAR. 10. By means of the aforesaid advertisements and other of similar import and meaning not specifically referred to herein, respondent falsely and deceptively advertised fur products in that certain of said fur products were falsely or deceptively identified with respect to the name or designation of the animal or animals that produced the fur from which said fur products had been manufactured, in violation of Section 5(a) (5) of the Fur Products Labeling Act.

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Among such falsely and deceptively advertised fur products, but not limited thereto, were fur products advertised 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 designation.

PAR. 11. By means of the aforesaid advertisements and other advertisements of similar import and meaning, not specifically referred to herein, respondent falsely and deceptively advertised fur products in that said advertisements represented that the prices of fur products were reduced from respondent's former prices and that the amount of such price reductions afforded savings to the purchasers of respondent's fur products when, in truth and in fact, the alleged former prices were fictitious in that they were not actual bona fide prices at which respondent 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. 12. Respondent 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 respondent's former prices and the purported reductions constituted savings to purchasers of respondent's 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 respondent 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) of the Fur Products Labeling Act and Rule 44(a) of the Rules and Regulations.

PAR. 13. By means of the aforesaid advertisements and others of similar import and meaning not specifically referred to herein, respondent 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 "Dyed Broadtail-processed Lamb" was not set

forth in the manner required, in violation of Rule 10 of the said Rules and Regulations.

(b) 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.

PAR. 14. The aforesaid acts and practices of respondent, 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 Federal Trade Commission having initiated an investigation of certain acts and practices of the respondent named in the caption hereof, and the respondent having been furnished thereafter with a copy of a draft of complaint which the Bureau of Textiles and Furs proposed to present to the Commission for its consideration and which, if issued by the Commission, would charge respondent with violation of the Federal Trade Commission Act and the Fur Products Labeling Act; and

The respondent and counsel for the Commission having thereafter executed an agreement containing a consent order, an admission by the respondent of all the jurisdictional facts set forth in the aforesaid draft of complaint, a statement that the signing of said agreement is for settlement purposes only and does not constitute an admission by the respondent that the law has been violated as alleged in such complaint, and waivers and provisions as required by the Commission's rules; and

The Commission, having reason to believe that the respondent has violated said Acts, and having determined that complaint should issue stating its charges in that respect, hereby issues its complaint, accept said agreement, makes the following jurisdictional findings, and enters the following order:

1. Respondent Colbert's is a corporation organized, existing and doing business under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Texas, with its office and principal place of business located at 221 Centre Street, in the city of Dallas, State of Texas.

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

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ORDER

It is ordered, That respondent Colbert's, a corporation, and its officers, and respondent's representatives, agents and employees, directly or through any corporate or other device, in connection with the 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 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 whether accompanied or not by descriptive terminology is the respondent's former price of fur products when such price is in excess of the price at which such fur products have been sold or offered for sale in good faith by the respondent in the recent regular course of business, or otherwise misrepresenting the price at which such fur products had been sold or offered for sale by respondent.

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

3. Failing to affix labels to fur products showing in words and in figures plainly legible all of the information required to be disclosed by each of the subsections of Section 4(2) of the Fur Products Labeling Act.

4. Failing to set forth on labels the item number or mark assigned to each such fur product.

B. Falsely or deceptively invoicing fur products by:

1. Failing to furnish invoices, as the term "invoice" is defined in the Fur Products Labeling Act, showing in words and figures plainly legible all the information required to be disclosed by each of the subsections of Section 5(b)(1) of the Fur Products Labeling Act.

2. Setting forth on invoices pertaining to any such 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. 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."

4. 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.

5. Failing to set forth on invoices the item number or mark assigned to each such fur product.

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. Represents, directly or by implication, that any price whether accompanied or not by descriptive terminology is the respondent's former price of fur products when such price is in excess of the price at which such fur products have been sold or offered for sale in good faith by the respondent in the recent regular course of business, or otherwise misrepresenting the price at which such fur products have been sold or offered for sale by respondent.

4. Misrepresents in any manner the savings available to purchasers of respondent's fur products.

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

6. 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

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Regulations promulgated thereunder to describe fur products which are not pointed, bleached, dyed, tip-dyed, or otherwise artificially colored.

It is further ordered, That the respondent herein shall, within sixty (60) days after service upon it of this order, file with the Commission a report in writing setting forth in detail the manner and form in which it has complied with this order.
