

IN THE MATTER OF

S.S.S. COMPANY ET AL.

ORDER, OPINION, ETC., IN REGARD TO THE ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION ACT*Docket 8646. Complaint, Sept. 14, 1964—Decision, June 26, 1968*

Order requiring an Atlanta, Ga., manufacturer of drug preparations and its advertising agency to cease misrepresenting that respondent's preparations will relieve tiredness or weakness unless expressly limited to a symptom caused by deficiency of vitamins supplied by such preparation, that the use of the preparation will aid the prevention of iron or vitamin deficiency, that iron deficiency anemia can be self-diagnosed or determined without medical or laboratory tests, and making other misleading claims for the effectiveness of "S.S.S. Tonic" or "S.S.S. Tablets."

COMPLAINT

Pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Trade Commission Act, and by virtue of the authority vested in it by said Act, the Federal Trade Commission, having reason to believe that the S.S.S. Company, a corporation, and Tucker Wayne & Company, a corporation, herein-after referred to as respondents, have violated the provisions of said 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 S.S.S. Company is a corporation, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Georgia, with its office and principal place of business located at 71 University Avenue, SW., in the city of Atlanta, State of Georgia.

Respondent Tucker Wayne & Company is a corporation, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Georgia, with its office and principal place of business located at 1175 Peachtree Street, NE., in the city of Atlanta, State of Georgia.

PAR. 2. Respondent S.S.S. Company, is now, and has been for more than one year last past, engaged in the sale and distribution of preparations containing ingredients which come within the classification of drugs as the term "drug" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act.

The designations used by respondent S.S.S. Company for the said preparations, the formulae thereof and directions for use are as follows:

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1. Designation: S.S.S. Tonic

Formula :

Contents :

High potency dosage
(3 tablespoons)
contains

(B ₁) Thiamine -----	mg--	5.0
(B ₂) Riboflavin -----	mg--	5.0
Niacinamide -----	mg--	20.0
(B ₁₂) Cyanocobalamine -----	mcg--	0.6
Iron (as the Ammonium Citrate) -----	mg--	100.0

Also contains: Queen's Delight (*Stillingia Sylvatica*), Swamp Sumac (*Rhus Vernix*), Sumac (*Rhus Glabra*). ALCOHOL 12 percent.

Directions :

ADULTS

(High-Potency Dose)—1 tablespoon three times daily, at mealtime, for a therapeutic dosage of iron, plus more than the minimum daily requirements of Vitamin B₁, B₂, Niacinamide, and supplemental amounts of Vitamin B₁₂.

CHILDREN

(6 to 12 years)—½ tablespoon three times daily, at mealtime.

2. Designation: S.S.S. Tablets

Formula :

Contents of Vitamins, Minerals, etc. :

High potency dose
(2 tablets daily)
provides

Thiamine NO ₃ (B ₁) -----	mg--	10
Riboflavin (B ₂) -----	mg--	4.8
Niacinamide -----	mg--	60
Pyridoxine HCl (B ₆) -----	mg--	1
Vitamin B ₁₂ (Crystalline) -----	mcg--	3
Calcium Pantothenate -----	mg--	4
Vitamin C -----	mg--	150
Iron (Ferrous Fumarate) -----	mg--	100
Copper (Copper Sulphate Anhydrous) -----	mg--	2

Plus the activity of S.S.S. Drug Extractives from Queen's Delight, Swamp Sumac and Sumac.

Directions :

High-potency (adult) dose of iron and Vitamins B₁, B₂, B₁₂: 1 tablet taken twice daily, at mealtime.

Sustaining (adult) dose supplying more than MDR of iron and important B-vitamins: 1 tablet daily at mealtime.

Children (6 to 12 years): 1 tablet daily at mealtime.

May be taken regularly according to directions to provide more than an adequate intake of iron and certain important B-vitamins.

The above designated preparations are sometimes referred to collectively as "S.S.S. Tonic."

PAR. 3. Respondent S.S.S. Company causes the said preparations, when sold, to be transported from its place of business in the State of Georgia to purchasers thereof located in various other States of the United States and in the District of Columbia. Respondent maintains, and at all times mentioned herein has maintained, a course of

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trade in said preparations in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act. The volume of business in such commerce has been and is substantial.

Respondent Tucker Wayne & Company, is now, and since January 1, 1963, has been, the advertising agency of the S.S.S. Company, and now prepares and places, and since January 1, 1963, has prepared and placed, for publication advertising material, including certain advertising hereinafter referred to, to promote the sale of the said preparations. In the conduct of its business, and at all times mentioned herein, respondent Tucker Wayne & Company has been in substantial competition, in commerce, with other corporations, firms and individuals in the advertising business.

PAR. 4. In the course and conduct of their said businesses, respondents have disseminated, and caused the dissemination of, certain advertisements concerning the said preparations by the United States mails and by various means in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, including, but not limited to, advertisements inserted in newspapers, magazines and other advertising media, and by means of television and radio broadcasts transmitted by television and radio stations located in various States of the United States, and in the District of Columbia, having sufficient power to carry such broadcasts across State lines, for the purpose of inducing and which were likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of said preparations; and have disseminated, and caused the dissemination of, advertisements concerning said preparations by various means, including but not limited to the aforesaid media, for the purpose of inducing and which were likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of said preparations in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act.

PAR. 5. Among and typical of the statements and representations contained in said advertisements disseminated as hereinabove set forth are the following:

Do you find yourself *missing out* on the fun in life? Do you feel dull, draggy * * * just "too tired" to do things? Then maybe you're just suffering from Iron Deficiency Anemia—*low blood power*. If so, what you need is *Three-S Tonic!* New-formula Three-S Tonic—now with B-vitamins—is rich in iron to help *build back* your blood power * * * *restore* your energy * * * help you *feel better fast!* Three-S Tonic goes to work within *24 hours*. And if you don't feel better in just *six days* * * * the Three-S Company will refund your money * * * every cent of it!

Yes, yes, yes * * * get S.S.S.! Get started on new-formula, iron-and-vitamin-enriched Three-S Tonic * * * in liquid or tablet form * * * *right away!* (Radio)

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Get that young blood feeling. Remember when you felt like that? When you had that young blood feeling. Well you can have that pep and vitality again with S.S.S. Tonic, the Tonic that contains 10 times your minimum daily requirements or iron * * * and iron is what helps to build blood power, give you that young blood feeling. So if you've been tired and listless, suffering from iron deficiency anemia, take S.S.S. Tonic, in liquid or tablets * * * and if you don't feel better in just six days the S.S.S. Company will refund your money. (Radio)

* * * * *

Young blood. How long since you had that young blood feeling, the feeling you could work all day and dance all night? Too long? Then take S.S.S. Tonic, and if you've been tired, jumpy, run down, due to iron deficiency anemia, S.S.S. will help you get that young blood feeling in just six days or your money back. How? Listen. Vitamin enriched S.S.S. Tonic contains ten times your minimum daily requirements of iron. Iron to help build back the blood power that carries oxygen and nutrition to muscles and all parts of your body. That's where your pep and vitality come from * * * The conversion of oxygen and nutrition into energy. So, if you aren't getting enough iron in your diet, S.S.S. makes this unqualified guarantee. If, in six short days you aren't feeling stronger, happier, aren't getting that young blood feeling, every cent you paid for S.S.S. Tonic will be refunded by the S.S.S. Company. (Radio)

* * * * *

Feel weak, dog-tired? Lost your spark? Take *Three-S* . . . the tonic that starts giving you *more power per hour* . . . within 24 hours! (Radio)

* * * * *

New formula *Three-S* Tonic contains the elements you *need* to help *build back* your blood power * * * restore your energy. Important, *too* * * * *Three-S* Tonic helps you feel better *fast*. It goes to work within 24 hours! (Radio)

* * * * *

PAR. 6. Through the use of said advertisements, and others similar thereto not specifically set out herein, respondents have represented and are now representing, directly or by implication:

1. That the use of S.S.S. Tonic and S.S.S. Tablets will be of benefit, safe and effective in the treatment and relief of a deficiency of iron, iron deficiency anemia, tiredness, lack of pep, energy and strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling and nervousness.

2. That the ingredients other than iron, as supplied by S.S.S. Tonic and S.S.S. Tablets, contribute to the effectiveness of these preparations in the treatment and relief of a deficiency of iron and iron deficiency anemia.

3. That the formulae for S.S.S. Tonic and S.S.S. Tablets and the ingredients contained therein are new medical and scientific discoveries and achievements.

4. That the use of S.S.S. Tonic and S.S.S. Tablets will increase the strength and energy in the body within 24 hours.

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5. That the purchase price of S.S.S. Tonic and S.S.S. Tablets will be refunded unconditionally if the purchaser is not satisfied with the preparations.

PAR. 7. In truth and in fact:

1. Neither S.S.S. Tonic nor S.S.S. Tablets will be of benefit in the treatment or relief of tiredness, lack of pep, energy or strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling or nervousness except in a small minority of persons whose tiredness, lack of pep, energy or strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling or nervousness is due to a deficiency of one or more of the vitamins provided by these preparations or to a deficiency of iron or to iron-deficiency anemia.

2. None of the ingredients other than iron, as supplied by S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets, are of any benefit in the treatment or relief of a deficiency of iron or iron deficiency anemia.

3. Neither S.S.S. Tonic nor S.S.S. Tablets contain any vitamin, mineral or other ingredient or combination of ingredients, which is a new medical or scientific discovery or achievement.

4. Neither S.S.S. Tonic nor S.S.S. Tablets will increase strength or energy in the body within 24 hours.

5. The purchase price of S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets is not refunded unconditionally, but there are terms and conditions which must be complied with by a purchaser in order for him to secure a refund, which terms and conditions are not disclosed in the advertising.

Therefore, the advertisements referred to in Paragraph Five above, were, and are, misleading in material respects and constituted, and now constitute, false advertisements, as that term is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act.

PAR. 8.* Furthermore, the statements and representations in said advertisements have the capacity and tendency to suggest, and do suggest, to persons viewing, hearing or reading such advertisements that in cases of persons of both sexes and all ages who experience tiredness, lack of pep, energy or strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling or nervousness, there is a reasonable probability that these symptoms will respond to treatment by the use of these preparations: and have the capacity and tendency to suggest, and do suggest, that in cases of persons of both sexes and all ages who have a deficiency of iron or who have iron deficiency anemia, the preparations can be used safely and effectively in the treatment and relief of a deficiency of iron or of iron deficiency anemia and their symptoms. In the light of such statements and representations, said advertisements are misleading in a material

* Reported as amended by hearing examiner's order dated Nov. 28, 1966.

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respect and therefore constitute false advertisements, as that term is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, because they fail to reveal the material facts that in the great majority of persons, or of any age, sex or other group or class thereof, who experience tiredness, lack of pep, energy or strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling or nervousness, these symptoms are not caused by a deficiency of one or more of the vitamins provided by S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets or by a deficiency of iron or iron deficiency anemia, and that in such persons the said preparations will be of no benefit.

PAR. 9. The dissemination by the respondents of the false advertisements, as aforesaid, constituted, and now constitutes, unfair and deceptive acts and practices in commerce, in violation of Sections 5 and 12 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

Mr. Leroy M. Yarnoff, Mr. William E. McMahon, II, supporting the complaint.

Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy, Atlanta, Ga., by *Mr. Edward E. Dorsey* and *Mr. Wayne H. Shortridge* for the respondents.

INITIAL DECISION BY ANDREW C. GOODHOPE, HEARING EXAMINER

OCTOBER 13, 1967

The Federal Trade Commission issued its complaint against respondents on September 14, 1964, charging them with violations of Sections 5 and 12 of the Federal Trade Commission Act. The respondents filed an answer in which they admitted certain allegations of the complaint but denied that they had violated either Section 5 or 12 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

THE PLEADINGS

The Federal Trade Commission alleged in Paragraph Six of the complaint that the respondents had made certain representations in the advertisements of the products S.S.S. Tonic and S.S.S. Tablets. The complaint alleges that the representations are false and misleading since they make the following claims:

1. That the S.S.S. preparations will be of benefit in treating tiredness symptoms¹ without limiting these claims of relief to the small number of persons suffering from iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia, or a deficiency of the vitamins contained in such preparations (Subpar. 1 of Pars. 6 and 7).

¹ For brevity, the term "tiredness symptoms" is used throughout this Initial Decision to include all such terms used in the complaint, including "tiredness, lack of pep, energy or strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling or nervousness."

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2. That the ingredients other than iron in the S.S.S. preparations contribute to the effectiveness of these preparations in the treatment or relief of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia (Subpar. 2 of Pars. 6 and 7).

3. That the S.S.S. preparations are "new" medical discoveries (Subpar. 3 of Pars. 6 and 7).

4. That the S.S.S. preparations will increase strength and energy in the body within 24 hours after ingestion (Subpar. 4 of Pars. 6 and 7).

5. That the guarantee for the S.S.S. preparations is unconditional (Subpar. 5 of Pars. 6 and 7).

Further, the Federal Trade Commission affirmatively alleges in Paragraph Eight of the Complaint that:

1. The advertisements for the S.S.S. preparations suggest:

(a) to all persons hearing the advertisements having tiredness symptoms that there is a reasonable probability that tiredness symptoms will respond to treatment by use of the S.S.S. preparations; and

(b) to all persons who have iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia that the S.S.S. preparations are safe and effective in the treatment and relief of iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia and their symptoms; and

2. The advertisements making such representations are false because they fail to reveal the material facts that in the great majority of persons, or any subgroup thereof who have tiredness symptoms, the symptoms are not caused by iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia or a deficiency of one or more of the vitamins in the S.S.S. preparations; and in that great majority of persons, or any subgroup thereof, the S.S.S. preparations will be of no benefit.

In response to these allegations, respondents deny that the advertisements represent that the S.S.S. preparations will be of benefit in treating the tiredness symptoms without any limitations. Respondents contend that the advertisements for the S.S.S. preparations represent that the S.S.S. preparations are of benefit in treating tiredness symptoms only if tiredness symptoms are caused by iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia and that this representation is true.

Respondents deny that there is any representation in its advertisements that the ingredients other than iron in the S.S.S. preparations are of benefit in the treatment or relief of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia. Respondents contend that no such claim is made and further that the advertisements merely state that the other ingredients are present in the products.

Respondents deny that the advertisements for the S.S.S. preparations represent that they are "new" medical and scientific discoveries.

Respondents deny that the advertisements represent that the S.S.S. preparations will increase strength and energy in the body within 24 hours.

Respondents also deny that the terms of the guarantee are not fully set forth on the cartons and labels of the preparations.²

Respondents also deny the allegations in Paragraph Eight of the complaint to the effect that respondents' advertising is false and misleading because it fails to reveal the allegedly material fact that in the great majority of persons, or any subgroup thereof, the tiredness symptoms are not caused by iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia or a deficiency of one or more of the vitamins in the S.S.S. preparations.

This matter is before the hearing examiner for final consideration on the complaint, answer, evidence, the proposed findings of fact and conclusions and briefs filed by counsel for respondents and counsel supporting the complaint. Consideration has been given to the proposed findings of fact and conclusions and briefs submitted by both parties, and all proposed findings of fact and conclusions not hereinafter specifically found or concluded are rejected; and the hearing examiner, having considered the entire record herein, makes the following findings of fact, conclusions drawn therefrom and issues the following order:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent S.S.S. Company is a corporation organized, existing and doing business under the laws of the State of Georgia, with its principal office and place of business located at 71 University Avenue, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia.

2. Respondent Tucker Wayne & Company is a corporation organized, existing and doing business under the laws of the State of Georgia, with its principal office and place of business located at 1175 Peachtree Street, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia.

3. Respondent S.S.S. Company is now, and has been for more than one year last past, engaged in the sale and distribution of preparations containing ingredients which come within the classification of drugs as the term "drug" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act.

4. The designations used by respondent S.S.S. Company for said preparations, the formulae thereof and directions for use are as follows:

² Counsel supporting the complaint have proposed no findings of fact or proposed order to cease and desist pertaining to respondents' guarantee claims. Consequently, the hearing examiner considers this charge to have been abandoned during trial.

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1. Designation: "New Formula S.S.S. Tonic"

Formula	High potency dosage (3 tablespoons) contains	Minimum daily requirement equivalent
Contents:		
(B ₁) Thiamine.....	5.0 mg.....	5 times MDR.
(B ₂) Riboflavin.....	2.4 mg.....	2 times MDR.
Niacinamide.....	20.0 mg.....	2 times MDR.
(B ₁₂) Cyanocobalamine.....	0.6 mcg.....	(Not estab.).
Iron (as the Ammonium Citrate)....	100.0 mg.....	10 times MDR.

NOTE.—Also contains: Queen's Delight (*Stillingia Sylvatica*); Swamp Sumac (*Rhus Vernix*); Sumac (*Rhus Glabra*); Alcohol 12 percent.

Directions:

ADULTS

(High-Potency Dose)—1 tablespoon three times daily, at mealtime, for a therapeutic dosage of iron, plus more than the minimum daily requirements of Vitamin B₁, B₂, Niacinamide, and supplemental amounts of Vitamin B₁₂.

CHILDREN

(6 to 12 years)—½ tablespoon three times daily, at mealtime.

2. Designation: "New Formula S.S.S. Tablets"

Formula	ACTIVE INGREDIENTS	
	High potency dose 2 tablets daily provides	Minimum daily require- ment equivalent
Contents of Vitamins, Minerals, etc.:		
Thiamine NO ₃ (B ₁).....	10 mg.....	10 times MDR.
Riboflavin (B ₂).....	4.8 mg.....	4 times MDR.
Niacinamide.....	60 mg.....	6 times MDR.
Pyridoxine HCL (B ₆).....	1 mg.....	Need Accepted. ¹
Vitamin B ₁₂ (Crystalline).....	3 mcg.....	Need Accepted. ¹
Calcium Pantothenate.....	4 mg.....	(?).
Vitamin C.....	150 mg.....	5 times MDR.
Iron (Ferrous Fumarate).....	100 mg.....	10 times MDR.
Copper (Copper Sulphate Anhydrous).	2 mg.....	Need Accepted. ¹

¹ The need for daily intake is accepted, but minimum daily requirement is not established.

² The need in human nutrition is not established.

NOTE: MDR signifies the officially established minimum required daily intake for an adult.

NOTE.—Plus the activity of S.S.S. Drug Extractives from Queen's Delight, Swamp Sumac and Sumac.

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Directions:

High-potency (adult) dose of iron and Vitamins B₁, B₂, B₁₂: 1 tablet taken twice daily, at mealtime.

Sustaining (adult) dose supplying more than MDR of iron and important B-vitamins: 1 tablet daily at mealtime.

Children (6 to 12 years): 1 tablet daily at mealtime.

May be taken regularly according to directions to provide more than an adequate intake of iron and certain important B-vitamins. (CX 13A and B and CX 14A and B; RX 1, 5)

5. Respondent S.S.S. Company causes the said preparations, when sold, to be transported from its place of business in the State of Georgia to purchasers thereof located in various other States of the United States and in the District of Columbia. Respondent maintains, and at all times mentioned herein has maintained, a course of trade in said preparations in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act. The volume of business in such commerce has been and is substantial, in excess of \$2 million annually (Tr. 132).

6. Respondent Tucker Wayne & Company is now, and since January 1, 1963, has been preparing and placing for publication advertising material, including certain advertising, hereinafter referred to, to promote the sale of the said preparations. In the conduct of its business, and at all times mentioned herein, respondent Tucker Wayne & Company has been in substantial competition, in commerce, with other corporations, firms, and individuals in the advertising business.

7. In the course and conduct of their said business, respondents have disseminated, and have caused the dissemination of, certain advertisements concerning the said preparations by the United States mails and *by various means in commerce*, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, including, but not limited to, advertisements inserted in newspapers, magazines, and other advertising media and *by means of* television and radio broadcasts transmitted by television and radio stations, located in various States of the United States and in the District of Columbia, which have sufficient power to carry such broadcasts across State lines, for the purpose of inducing and which were likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of said preparations: and have disseminated, and have caused the dissemination of, advertisements concerning said preparations by various means, including, but not limited to, the aforesaid media, for the purpose of inducing and which were likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of said preparations in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act.

8. Among and typical of the statements contained in respondents' advertisements, disseminated as described above, is the following:

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Do you find yourself *missing out* on the fun in life? Do you feel dull, draggy * * * just "too tired" to do things? Then maybe you're suffering from Iron Deficiency Anemia—*low blood power*. If so, what you need is *Three-S Tonic*! New-formula Three-S Tonic—now with B-vitamins—is rich in iron to help *build back* your blood power * * * *restore* your energy * * * help you *feel better fast*! Three-S Tonic goes to work within *24-hours*. And if you don't feel better in just *six days* * * * the Three-S Company will refund your money * * * every cent of it! So don't *miss out* on the fun in life. Don't *let* yourself feel "too tired" to enjoy things. If *you're* suffering from Iron Deficiency Anemia, take *Three-S Tonic*! Yes, yes, yes * * * get S.S.S.! Get started on new-formula, iron-and-vitamin-enriched Three-S Tonic * * * in liquid or tablet form * * * *right away*! (CX 2.)³

The majority of respondents' advertising consists of radio announcements given over stations located throughout the United States (CX 5C—5Z6; RX 11-16) and constitutes a substantial expenditure on the part of the S.S.S. Company in promoting and selling its products (Tr. 112-113). Respondents' advertising is directed to and reaches a market comprised primarily of rurally oriented people, such as Whites and Negroes living in rural areas, former rural Whites and Negroes living in urban areas and Spanish speaking Americans living in either rural or urban areas. (Tr. 144, 158-60, 188-89, 766-69, 928-32; RX 11-16.)

9. The first charge of false and misleading advertising in the complaint is that these ads falsely claim that the S.S.S. preparations will be of benefit for all tiredness symptoms whether arising from a deficiency of iron, iron deficiency anemia, or a deficiency of the vitamins contained in the preparations or from any other cause. Respondents contend that their advertisements simply claim that S.S.S. preparations will be beneficial in the relief of tiredness symptoms only if the tiredness symptoms are due to a deficiency of iron or iron deficiency anemia.

Preliminarily, neither the Commission complaint nor counsel in support of the complaint urge that respondents' preparations do not contain an adequate therapeutic dosage of iron and the vitamins in the preparations if taken as directed. In fact, counsel in support of the complaint agree that the preparations are adequate therapeutic dosages of both the iron and vitamins in the preparations if taken as directed for a sufficient period of time (CSC 66th and 72nd Proposed Findings).

10. In interpreting the ads themselves, the examiner is persuaded by a previous decision of the Commission which was affirmed on appeal to the Courts, *In the Matter of The J. B. Williams Company, Inc., et al.*, FTC Docket No. 8574, decided September 28, 1965 [68 F.T.C.

³ All of respondents' radio advertisements are set forth in full in Appendix A, attached hereto and made a part of this finding p. 1080 herein.

481], *aff'd and enforced*, *The J. B. Williams Company, Inc., et al. v. F.T.C.*, 381 F. 2d 884 (6th Cir., 1967). The Commission and the Court in the *Williams* case found deception to exist when considering virtually identical television ads to those used by these respondents on radio. As in the *Williams* case, the respondents here heavily stress general, nonspecific symptoms of tiredness and claim that these symptoms can be alleviated and entirely eliminated by consuming their preparations. While the ads always mention the possibility of iron deficiency anemia or a deficiency of iron, by their very nature the ads suggest that the tiredness symptoms are due to lack of iron and will uniformly be eliminated by taking respondents' preparations. It is true that if one is deficient in iron or vitamins, the preparations may be beneficial; however, the tiredness symptoms which respondents' ads stress so heavily cannot be said to be generally attributed to a deficiency of iron. Tiredness symptoms are common complaints of many different diseases and disorders (Tr. 315, 346, 362, 387, 398, 537, 601, 831-32, 971, 1090, 1746, 1960). In fact these tiredness symptoms are not even reliable indications of the possible existence of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia. Generally such deficiency cannot be properly determined without medical tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician (Tr. 346-7, 358, 366-68, 395, 543, 867, 1358-9, 1391, 1395, 1646, 1658-9, 2147).

Consequently, respondents' ads are false and misleading in claiming that their preparations will cure tiredness symptoms which may not even be remotely connected with iron or vitamin deficiency in most instances.

11. A discussion of iron metabolism, iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia, their causes and remedies and the incidences of iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia in the population is necessary in view of the last and later findings.

12. Iron is necessary for life and is present in the body in hemoglobin, myoglobin, certain other enzymes and plasma and as storage iron. The human body does not synthesize iron; therefore, all iron in the body must come from outside sources. The total amount of iron in the adult body varies within the range of 3.5 to 6 grams (Tr. 244-245, 249, 334, 1380, 1438, 1770; RX 56, p. 20). The largest amount of iron in the body is present in the hemoglobin, the red pigment of red blood cells. Hemoglobin is a protein which contains 0.34 percent iron and cannot be synthesized without iron. The important function of hemoglobin is the transport of oxygen from the lungs to the tissues and carbon dioxide from the tissues to the lungs (Tr. 254, 332-334, 797-798, 953; RX 56, pp. 21, 26). Myoglobin is an iron-containing protein which

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gives red color to muscle tissue. It is presumed to supply oxygen to the muscle tissues of the body (Tr. 245; RX 56, pp. 26-27). A very minute amount of the total iron in the body is present in certain enzymes which perform certain important functions (Tr. 245, 1589-90; RX 56, pp. 21, 28-31). A very small amount of the total body iron is also present in the plasma, the fluid portion of the blood (Tr. 250, 332-33, 1189, 1588). Iron is stored in the body, principally in the bone marrow, liver and spleen, and in much lesser amount in other tissues. The storage iron is available when there is increased need for iron, such as occurs in bleeding, pregnancy and periods of very rapid growth. Storage iron may vary from zero to 20 or 30 grams but the normal amount of iron in storage is within the range of 0.5 gram to 1.5 grams (Tr. 249, 797, 1007, 1008, 1587-88, 1893, 1920).

13. The usual way in which iron finds its way into the human body is through the eating of food since most foods contain some iron. Meats and eggs are the common foods with substantial amounts of iron. The amount of iron in the average daily adult diet is between 6 and 20 milligrams (Tr. 255-256, 449-450, 871, 1471-72, 1892). Ingested iron is absorbed principally from the upper part of the small intestine into the mucosa in the ferrous form; it then passes to the bloodstream where it combines with a transport protein; it then goes to the liver and bone marrow and can be stored or made into hemoglobin, depending upon the need of the moment (Tr. 247, 1431-33). Red blood cells are formed in the bone marrow either as mature red blood cells or as immature cells known as reticulocytes. Red blood cells have an average life span of approximately 120 days. When a red cell dies, the iron in the cell is reutilized for the production of new red cells (Tr. 250, 333, 1381, 1432-35).

14. Iron is normally carefully conserved and reutilized, however, a small amount of iron, between 0.5 mg. and 1 mg. per day, is lost through cells shed from the skin and from the bowel, in the urine, and in the bile, the saliva, hair and sweat (Tr. 394, 539, 594, 800, 1169, 1375, 1437, 1737). Iron is also lost during pregnancy and lactation. The net loss of iron by a woman from a normal pregnancy, including bleeding at delivery as well as iron supplied to the child during pregnancy, is between 250 and 800 mg. During the period of lactation, the normal loss of iron by the mother approximates $\frac{1}{2}$ mg. daily in the milk (Tr. 800-802, 1169, 1467).

15. The only other way that iron can be lost from the human body is through bleeding. This bleeding can result from many causes (Tr. 1168-71, 1296). However, the only natural physiological blood loss is from menstrual bleeding. Non-pregnant women during the

usual child-bearing years lose an additional one to two mg. per day on the average due to menstruation (Tr. 249, 539, 594, 1375-76, 1467). The only other time when there is a substantial demand for iron in the human body is during infancy, childhood and adolescence (Tr. 273, 540-41, 802, 1449, 1882).

16. Iron deficiency anemia is an anemia due to a deficiency of iron in the body (Tr. 270-71, 799, 954, 1048, 1101, 1166, 1285-1286, 1357). Iron deficiency is a broader term than iron deficiency anemia although it has frequently been used in the record as synonymous therewith. Iron deficiency includes both iron deficiency anemia and a state in which the iron stores have been exhausted, function of the iron in the body has been impaired but the deficiency is not sufficiently great to produce readily recognizable reduction in the hemoglobin level or red blood cell count (Tr. 341, 1439-43, 1638, 1873, 2111-12; RX 56, p. 94). Iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia do not exist until after storage of iron has been exhausted and this usually takes months or years in a normal individual (Tr. 276, 340-41, 394-95, 539, 1637, 1771, 1893, 1920, 2029).

17. Normal levels of hemoglobin below which anemia may be presumed to exist differ for different groups in the population. While there were variances in these ranges given by the various experts who testified, the following are found to be the normal ranges given:

Adult males—12 to 18 grams of hemoglobin per 100 ml. of blood.

Adult females of the childbearing age—11 to 16 grams of hemoglobin per 100 ml. of blood.

Post-menopausal females—11 to 18 grams of hemoglobin per 100 ml. of blood.

Infants—10 to 12.5 grams of hemoglobin per 100 ml. of blood.

Children ages 6 to 12—11.5 to 12.5 grams of hemoglobin per 100 ml. of blood.

Adolescents—depends on length of time after puberty.

(Tr. 296-99, 580-81, 680, 855, 966, 1006, 1049, 1138-40, 1200-01, 1286, 1788, 1965-66, 2041, 2062, 2125.)

These ranges for hemoglobin content of the blood are merely ranges used by the medical profession as rules of thumb pertaining to most of the healthy individuals in the population. A given individual may be anemic with a hemoglobin within a normal range or may have a hemoglobin content outside these normal ranges without being either anemic or having too much hemoglobin or blood (Tr. 317, 349, 580, 1006).

18. Generally the causes of iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia are (1) inadequate intake of iron; (2) poor absorption of iron; (3) excessive demand for iron; or (4) excessive loss of iron from the body through bleeding (Tr. 272, 955, 1167, 1217, 1288, 1761-62, 2050).

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Inadequate intake of iron results from improper dietary habits and is principally found among alcoholics, food faddists and young women in the childbearing age who eat improperly because of considerations of their weight and appearance and among indigent people who cannot afford a proper diet. Also, some elderly people who live alone may not prepare proper food for themselves. In addition, some infants may be deficient in iron if kept on a strict milk diet which is low in iron content (Tr. 273, 538, 1062-63, 1119-20, 1135-36, 1177, 1290, 1367, 1387, 1809, 1946-48). Poor absorption of iron results from inability on the part of the person's stomach and intestines to absorb the iron from the food taken and transfer it to the blood so that it may be utilized in making additional hemoglobin (Tr. 368, 586-88, 1775). Excessive demand for iron as a cause of iron deficiency generally arises in only two situations; namely among rapidly growing adolescents and pregnant women. Excessive loss of iron from the body is always due to bleeding in some form. Among adult males, this bleeding is caused by such disorders as ulcers, hiatal hernia, diverticulosis, diverticulitis, lesions in the gastrointestinal tract, hemorrhoids and hookworm infestation in rural areas of the South (Tr. 880, 956, 1170-71, 1296, 1368). Excessive loss of iron among women of the childbearing age sometimes causes iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia because of excessive bleeding during menses and loss of iron from the mother's body during pregnancy, delivery and lactation (Tr. 383, 386, 576, 635, 1049, 1169, 1288, 1361, 1616-17).

19. The experts who testified all agreed that no lay person can properly diagnose the existence of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia from any of the tiredness symptoms. Iron deficiency anemia frequently exists without causing any signs or symptoms and, as found above, the tiredness symptoms occur in a great number of diseases other than iron deficiency anemia (Tr. 282, 318, 366, 660, 684, 867, 1076, 1245, 1332, 1390, 1465, 1960, 2011).

20. There are a number of clinic and laboratory tests available and used by the medical profession to determine the existence of anemia and that a particular anemia is due to iron deficiency. The simplest and most common tests used are hemoglobin counts, hematocrit counts and red blood cell counts (Tr. 282-83, 347-50, 389, 805-06, 857, 1246-47, 1357, 1873). In addition, there are a number of medical tests which can be performed if there remains any question as to the existence of iron deficiency anemia. These include study of red cell indices, microscopic examination of the blood, study of bone marrow and examination of serum iron. Also the therapeutic trial of iron on a patient with examination of results can be utilized to determine if iron deficiency ane-

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mia exists (Tr. 284-91, 350-58, 389-91, 442-43, 1195-96, 1246-47, 1358, 1440-42, 1589, 1736, 1767-68, 1873).

21. The record contains no precise figures as to what percentage of the United States population may be suffering from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia at any time. The evidence consists of testimony by experts who as a part of their medical practice or teaching are concerned with this and similar types of disorders. To arrive at a meaningful estimate with regard to the incidence of iron deficiency anemia, it is necessary to segregate the population into groups by age, sex, physiological state and by economic status.

The first group is adult males. In this group iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia is virtually nonexistent. Counsel for respondents concede and the testimony establishes that no more than one percent to two percent of the total male population ever incurs iron deficiency. (Respondents' Proposed Finding No. 80.) The next grouping is females of the childbearing age. In these adolescent girls and women, iron deficiency anemia occurs with more frequency than in any other population group. The principal reason for this is blood loss during menses, pregnancy, childbirth and lactation. An inadequate intake of iron may also be a contributing factor to the larger number of anemic persons in this group. The record contains numerous estimates on the part of the experts which are in substantial disagreement. The examiner is of the opinion that approximately ten percent of this group may be iron deficient or have iron deficiency anemia at any one time. Some of the experts called testified that only a very small proportion of these women ever suffered from iron deficiency anemia at some time during this period in their lives (Tr. 393-94, 554-56, 614, 802, 1791-95; CX 41 A-H). Other experts testified that the number of iron deficient persons in this group was substantially greater, that it constituted a public health problem and that the prophylactic administration of iron to pregnant women is a common practice (Tr. 309-13, 804, 863, 964, 1105-06, 1378-79, 1761, 2111). In any event, while the incidence of iron deficiency anemia is undoubtedly higher in this group than others, the examiner is of the opinion that there is not such a great number in this group to warrant respondents making the broad advertising claims that they do in their advertising even as pertaining to this group. Another grouping of the population are infants and children. Iron deficiency anemia is virtually nonexistent in this group unless an infant has been fed solely a diet of milk which may be low in iron content (Tr. 273, 538, 681-82). In adolescent children, iron deficiency anemia likewise is very rare (Tr. 684-85, 1371). Another group discussed by

the experts are post-menopausal women. Persons in this group may be in a deficiency state carried over from the time of the menopause; however, this situation usually soon corrects itself. Iron deficiency may also arise because of inadequate diet as these women grow older. This can also arise with elderly men. The examiner, however, does not believe that the number of persons with iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia in this group of the population can exceed approximately ten percent of this group (Tr. 1053, 1370, 1613, 1795-96). People in the lower social and economic strata of the United States population may be more prone to iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia than those in the middle and upper strata. This may result from a poorer diet or lack of medical treatment. However, the record does not permit any findings which would distinguish this group from the general population as far as iron deficiency anemia is concerned. Of course, extreme poverty may cause near starvation but lack of iron is only one problem in this situation. The examiner finds that in this lower social and economic grouping no significant iron deficiency exists as distinguished from other population groups (Tr. 423-24, 2045).

22. A number of the same experts who testified in the *Williams* case (*supra*) also testified in this proceeding. None of those who appeared in this proceeding in any way changed his testimony from that given in the *Williams* proceeding. After examining the testimony in the *Williams* proceeding as to the incidence of iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia in the population, the Sixth Circuit Court stated:

Not all of the approximate ten percent of the population who have iron deficiency anemia have moderate to severe anemia, and consequently exhibit mild or no symptoms. While there are no statistics available as to the number of people who are tired and run-down, or the number of people who are tired and run-down due to iron deficiency anemia, there is direct testimony that only a minority of people with these symptoms exhibit these symptoms because of iron deficiency anemia. Considering this evidence along with the fact that these symptoms are common and non-specific, the Commission could reasonably infer, and there was substantial evidence to support the finding, that the majority of the people who have these symptoms, have them because of causes other than iron deficiency anemia.

In addition, concerning the ads in the *Williams* case which are virtually identical with the ads in this proceeding, the Court stated:

Here the advertisements emphasize the fact that if you are often tired and run-down you will feel stronger fast by taking Geritol. The Commission, in looking at the overall impression created by the advertisements on the general public, could reasonably find these advertisements were false and misleading. The finding that the advertisements link common, non-specific symptoms with

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iron deficiency anemia, and thereby create a false impression because most people with these symptoms are not suffering from iron deficiency anemia, is both reasonable and supported by substantial evidence.

23. The complaint charges that respondents' advertisements are deceptive in that they claim that the ingredients other than iron contribute to the effectiveness of the S.S.S. preparations in the treatment of iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia. The only treatment for iron deficiency anemia is the administration of iron plus the correction of underlying causes for the deficiency if possible (Tr. 356, 363, 407, 602, 1451).

24. Respondents' advertisements do emphasize the fact that the S.S.S. preparations contain vitamins and leave the distinct impression that these vitamins make the preparations a better product in treating the tiredness symptoms and the possible iron deficiency anemia. The incidence of vitamin deficiency in the United States population is virtually nonexistent (Tr. 482, et seq., 535, 634, 827, 2053). Nor can the existence of the deficiency in the vitamins contained in the S.S.S. preparations properly be diagnosed without medical tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician (Tr. 491, 501-02, 508, 516, 524, 527, 829, 867).

25. None of the vitamins in respondents' preparations are of any benefit whatsoever in the treatment of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia. There was some testimony that the administration of iron in the presence of Vitamin C might enhance the absorption of the iron. This testimony, however, is so vague that no finding can be based thereon (Tr. 228, 430, 563, 970-1015, 1654-57, 2066-67, 2141). It is true, however, that the vitamins contained in the S.S.S. preparations are present in sufficient quantity to constitute therapeutic dosages of such vitamins if any such deficiency exists. (See CSC Proposed Finding 72.)

26. Respondents' advertisements refer to their preparations as "New-formula Three-S Tonic." The complaint alleges that this is deceptive in that respondents' preparations are not new medical and scientific discoveries and achievements. The principal executive of respondent S.S.S. Company stated that the formula for the S.S.S. preparations was last changed in 1958 (Tr. 734). However, the respondents have continued to use the word "new" to describe their preparations up until the present. The reason for the use of this term was stated to be to distinguish respondents' present preparations from those in existence prior to 1958 since some of such old preparations are still sold upon request (Tr. 736-37). A product which has been on sale for nearly ten years cannot be considered to be new in any circum-

stances. Consequently, the continued use of this term by respondents is deceptive. In addition, respondents could quite readily distinguish their present products from the pre-1958 products if they so desire without any deception.

27. In their ads respondents emphasize that the S.S.S. preparations "help you *feel better fast!* Three-S Tonic goes to work within 24-hours." The complaint alleges that this is false and deceptive in that it claims that the use of the S.S.S. preparations will increase the strength and energy in the body within 24 hours. While some of the iron will undoubtedly be ingested in a matter of 24 hours, the testimony of the record makes it conclusive that there can be no increase in strength or decrease in the tiredness symptoms within 24 hours attributable to this (Tr. 503, 656, 658, 864-65). Nor will the vitamins contained in the S.S.S. preparations have such results within 24 hours (Tr. 496, 511, 518-19, 544, 551). The experts who testified on this point emphasized the need for continued administration of both iron or vitamins over a considerable period of time, months to years, to correct such deficiencies.

28. Paragraph Eight of the complaint alleges that respondents' ads are misleading first in that they claim that all persons having tiredness symptoms, regardless of cause, will, with reasonable probability, be relieved by taking the S.S.S. preparations. As found above, this allegation has been established by the evidence of record. However, Paragraph Eight charges in addition that respondents' ads are false for the further reason that they fail to reveal a material fact; namely, that in the majority of people the tiredness symptoms are not caused by iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia, or a deficiency of any of the vitamins in S.S.S. preparations, and that, therefore, the preparations will be of no benefit.

29. As found above, the tiredness symptoms are general, nonspecific symptoms of a myriad of diseases other than iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia. These symptoms can even result from such causes as stress, worry or boredom without any physiological cause.

Consequently, respondents' broad claims for the S.S.S. preparations must be considered deceptive.

In the *Williams* case (*supra*), the Court stated pertaining to such advertisements:

While the advertising does not make the affirmative representation that the majority of people who are tired and run-down are so because of iron deficiency anemia and the product Geritol will be an effective cure, there is substantial evidence to support the finding of the Commission that most tired people are not so because of iron deficiency anemia, and the failure to disclose this fact

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is false and misleading because the advertisement creates the impression that the tired feeling is caused by something which Geritol can cure.

30. As to the charge that the respondents' ads are deceptive in not affirmatively disclosing the facts as to the actual incidence of iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia or a deficiency of the vitamins in the preparations, the examiner is bound by the Commission and Circuit Court decision in the *Williams* case (*supra*).

In the *Williams* case, *supra*, the Sixth Circuit Court in discussing the affirmative disclosure provisions in the Commission's order in that case stated:

Petitioners argue vigorously that the Commission does not have the legal power to require them to state the negative fact that "in the great majority of persons who experience such symptoms, these symptoms are not caused by a deficiency of one or more of the vitamins contained in the preparation or by iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia;" and "for such persons the preparation will be of no benefit."

We believe the evidence is clear that Geritol is of no benefit in the treatment of tiredness except in those cases where tiredness has been caused by a deficiency of the ingredients contained in Geritol. The fact that the great majority of people who experience tiredness symptoms do not suffer from any deficiency of the ingredients in Geritol is a "material fact" under the meaning of that term as used in Section 15 of the Federal Trade Commission Act and Petitioners' failure to reveal this fact in this day when the consumer is influenced by mass advertising utilizing highly developed arts of persuasion, renders it difficult for the typical consumer to know whether the product will in fact meet his needs unless he is told what the product will or will not do. This does not fall within the sphere of negative advertising, it merely presents to the consumer an opportunity to make an intelligent choice.

Consequently, it is apparent that as in the *Williams* case, respondents have deceived the public in failing to make such essential disclosures in their ads.

31. Paragraph Eight of the complaint also alleges that respondents' ads are deceptive since they claim that the preparations are safe and effective in the treatment and relief for all persons who have iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia and their symptoms. The record establishes that this claim is true and counsel in support of the complaint apparently so concede. (See CSC Proposed Finding 66.) The iron in the S.S.S. preparations are proper therapeutic dosages and will relieve and eliminate iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia and their symptoms if taken for a sufficient period of time.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Respondents' advertisements of the S.S.S. preparations are false and misleading in that they claim directly or by clear implication:

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A. That the use of such preparations will in all cases be of benefit in treating tiredness symptoms whatever their cause.

B. That the vitamin and other ingredients in such preparations contribute to the effectiveness of these preparations in the treatment or relief of iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia.

C. That iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia, or vitamin deficiency can be diagnosed by the general public without the need of appropriate medical tests.

D. That the preparations are "new" products and "new" medical discoveries.

E. That the use of such preparations will increase strength and energy in the body within 24 hours after ingestion.

2. Respondents' advertisements of the S.S.S. preparations are false and misleading in that they claim directly or by implication that there is a reasonable probability that the tiredness symptoms of any person will be eliminated or alleviated by use of such preparations without revealing the fact that the majority of persons with such symptoms are not suffering from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia or a deficiency of the vitamins in such preparations and that, therefore, such preparations will be of no benefit to such persons.

3. The dissemination by the respondents of the false and deceptive advertisements, as found above, constitute unfair and deceptive acts and practices, in commerce, in violation of Sections 5 and 12 of the Federal Trade Commission Act.

ORDER TO CEASE AND DESIST

It is ordered, That respondents S.S.S. Company, a corporation, and Tucker Wayne & Company, a corporation, and their officers, and respondents' representatives, agents and employees, directly or through any corporate or other device, in connection with the offering for sale, sale or distribution of the preparation designated "S.S.S. Tonic" or the preparation designated "S.S.S. Tablets," or any other preparation of substantially similar composition or possessing substantially similar properties, do forthwith cease and desist from directly or indirectly:

1. Disseminating or causing the dissemination of, by any means in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, any advertisement which represents, directly or by implication that:

(a) The use of such preparations will be of benefit in the prevention, relief or treatment of tiredness, lack of pep, energy or strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling or nervousness, or any other symptom unless such representa-

tion be expressly limited to a symptom or symptoms caused by a deficiency of one or more of the vitamins or iron provided by that preparation; and, further, unless such advertisement discloses clearly and conspicuously, in immediate or close proximity, and with equal prominence that in the majority of persons suffering from any such symptom or symptoms, the preparations will be of no benefit in the prevention, treatment or relief of such symptom or symptoms.

(b) The use of such preparations will be of benefit in the treatment or relief of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia in any specific group of people: *Provided, however*, That it shall be a defense in any enforcement proceeding instituted under this prohibition for the respondents to establish that there is a reasonable probability that a majority of persons within such group suffers from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia.

(c) The presence of iron deficiency anemia or iron deficiency of any degree can be self-diagnosed.

(d) The presence of iron deficiency anemia or iron deficiency of any degree can generally be determined without medical tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician.

(e) The presence of a deficiency of the B vitamins, or of any vitamin, can be self-diagnosed.

(f) The presence of a deficiency of the B vitamins, or of any vitamin, can generally be determined without medical tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician.

(g) Any ingredient other than iron in S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets contributes to the effectiveness of these or similar preparations in the prevention, treatment or relief of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia or of symptoms represented directly or by implication to be caused by iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia.

(h) There is any greater need for any one or more of the vitamins in S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets among persons suffering from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia than among persons not suffering from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia.

(i) The use of such preparations will increase the strength or energy of any part of the body in any amount of time less than that in which the consumer may actually experience improvement.

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(j) The formula of S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets is "new" or the formulae or ingredients are new medical or scientific discoveries or achievements.

2. Disseminating, or causing to be disseminated, by means of the United States mails or by any means in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, any advertisements which contain statements which are inconsistent with, negate or contradict any of the affirmative disclosures required by Paragraph 1 of this Order, or in any way obscure the meaning of such disclosures.

3. Disseminating, or causing to be disseminated, by any means, for the purpose of inducing, or which is likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of any such preparation in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, any advertisement which contains any of the representations prohibited by Paragraphs 1 or 2 hereof, or which fails to comply with the affirmative requirements of Paragraph 1 hereof.

APPENDIX A

ANNOUNCEMENT No. 63-13: 60 SECONDS

ANNCR.:

Do you find yourself *missing out* on the fun in life? Do you feel dull, draggy * * * just "too tired" to do things? Then maybe you're suffering from Iron Deficiency Anemia—*low blood power*. If so, what you need is *Three-S Tonic!*—now with B-vitamins—is rich in iron to help *build back* your blood power * * * *restore* your energy * * * help you *feel better fast!* Three-S Tonic goes to work within *2 1/2-hours*. And if you don't feel better in just *six days* * * * the Three-S Company will refund your money * * * every cent of it! So don't *miss out* on the fun in life. Don't let yourself feel "too tired" to enjoy things. If *you're* suffering from Iron Deficiency Anemia, take *Three-S Tonic!* Yes, yes, yes * * * get S.S.S.! Get started on new-formula, iron-and-vitamin-enriched Three-S Tonic * * * in liquid or table form * * * *right away!* (CX 2.)

ANNOUNCEMENT No. 63-3

Get that young blood feeling. Like my new hairdo? Sure do. You know? What? If you could cook, I'd ask you to marry me. Get that young blood feeling. Remember when you felt like that? When you had that young blood feeling, well you can have that pep and vitality again with S.S.S. Tonic, the Tonic that contains 10 times your minimum daily requirements of iron * * * and iron is what helps to build blood power, gives you that young blood feeling. So if you've been tired and listless, suffering from iron deficiency anemia, take S.S.S. Tonic, in liquid or tablets * * * and if you don't feel better in just six days, the S.S.S. Company will refund your money. Yes, yes, yes, get S.S.S. Life is great, don't settle for less, get that young blood feeling with S.S.S. (CX 3.)

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Appendix A

ANNOUNCEMENT No. 63-2

Young blood. How long since you had that young blood feeling, the feeling you could work all day and dance all night? Too long? Then take S.S.S. Tonic, and if you've been tired, jumpy, run down, due to iron deficiency anemia, S.S.S. will help you get that young blood feeling in just six days or your money back. How? Listen. Vitamin enriched S.S.S. Tonic contains ten times your minimum daily requirements of iron. Iron to help build back the blood power that carries oxygen and nutrition to muscles and all parts of your body. That's where your pep and vitality come from * * * The conversion of oxygen and nutrition into energy. So, if you aren't getting enough iron in your diet S.S.S. makes this unqualified guarantee. If, in just six short days you aren't feeling stronger, happier, aren't getting that young blood feeling, every cent you paid for S.S.S. Tonic will be refunded by the S.S.S. Company. Yes, Yes, Yes, get S.S.S. Tonic, in liquid or tablets. And get that young blood feeling fast. (CX 4.)

ANNOUNCEMENT No. SSSR-63-16:60 SECONDS

ANNCR.:

Feel weak, dog-tired? Lost your spark? Take *Three-S* * * * the tonic that starts giving you *more power per hour* * * * within 24 hours! Just as your *car* needs good gasoline * * * your *body*, too, needs *good* fuel to convert into *energy*—a combination of oxygen and nutrition that's carried throughout your body by the hemoglobin in your blood. *Iron* is essential in making this hemoglobin. So when your diet is *low in iron* * * * when you suffer from *iron deficiency anemia* * * * your body may not get enough fuel to spark you through a busy day. But new-formula, vitamin-enriched *Three-S Tonic* contains *ten times* your minimum daily requirements of iron. It helps to build *reserve* vitality! And *Three-S* goes to work *fast* * * * you feel better in just *six days* or the *Three-S* Company will refund your money! Yes, yes, yes * * * get S.S.S. Tonic *today* * * * in liquid or tablet form! (CX 6, 8, 9.)

ANNOUNCEMENT No. 63-14:60 SECONDS

ANNCR.:

When you're strong and healthy, you feel like *doing* things! You have *pep* and *energy* to spare. But when you have low blood power * * * *Iron Deficiency Anemia* * * * you become dull, draggy * * * feel *tired* all over * * * and have to *force* yourself to do your work. And that's when you need * * * iron-rich, vitamin-fortified * * * *Three-S Tonic*! New-formula *Three-S Tonic* contains the elements you need to help *build back* your blood power * * * *restore* your energy. Important, *too* * * * *Three-S Tonic* helps you feel better *fast*. It goes to work within 24 hours! Yes, yes, yes * * * S.S.S. makes it a promise. If you don't feel better in just *six days*, your money will be *refunded* by the *Three-S* Company! So if you're suffering from *Iron Deficiency Anemia*, don't wait! Get started on new-formula *Three-S Tonic* * * * in liquid or tablet form * * * *right away*! (CX 7.)

ANNOUNCEMENT No. 63-10

How long has it been since *you* had that happy, wideawake, *young blood feeling*? Too long? Then take *Three-S Tonic*! If you've been tired, rundown due to *Iron Deficiency Anemia* * * * *Three-S* will help you *regain* that young blood

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feeling in *just six days*, or your money back! Hard to believe? Then listen. Vitamin-enriched Three-S Tonic contains ten times your minimum daily requirements of iron. And *iron* is what helps to *build back blood power* * * * restore pep and vitality. So if *you* aren't getting enough iron in your diet, Three-S makes you this unqualified guarantee: If in just six short days you aren't feeling *stronger* and *happier* * * * if you aren't getting that young blood feeling * * * the Three-S Company will give you back *every cent* you paid for Three-S Tonic! See the guarantee on the label. Yes, yes, yes * * * get S.S.S. Tonic—in liquid or tablets—*today* * * * and get that young blood feeling * * * fast! (CX 10.)

ANNOUNCEMENT No. 63-14

Have you ever watched youngsters at play, and then said to yourself: "Oh, to be young again * * * to feel like *that*!" Well, maybe you *can* feel *younger* again * * * with Three-S Tonic! Iron-and-vitamin-enriched Three-S Tonic can help *give* you that "young blood feeling!" You see, as we grow older, many of us don't get the daily iron we need * * * we develop Iron Deficiency Anemia. The Blood can't maintain that rich, "young" condition to give you all the pep and energy you need. But when you take wonderful, new-formula Three-S Tonic * * * you *get* the iron you need * * * *plus* essential vitamins and special natural ingredients to help restore vim and vigor! With Three-S Tonic, *you get back* that "young blood feeling" * * * and you *get* it back in just six days, or get your money back * * * the Three-S Company will refund every cent you paid! See the guarantee on the label. Yes, Yes, Yes * * * get S.S.S. Tonic *today* * * * in liquid or tablet form! (CX 11.)

ANNOUNCEMENT No. 63-17

When your car needs spark plugs * * * it won't go. It just won't start! Sometimes, your body is the same way. It loses its spark * * * and you feel weak, tired-all-over. When that happens * * * and you're suffering from iron deficiency anemia * * * you need Three-S Tonic! New-formula Three-S Tonic is enriched with important B-vitamins and iron * * * to help produce extra energy * * * energy to get you started * * * keep you going! What's more, Three-S Tonic helps to build reserve vitality. It contains ten times your minimum daily requirements of iron. So if you suffer from iron deficiency anemia * * * if your body needs that extra spark to keep it going through a busy day * * * try Three-S Tonic. It starts to work within 24 hours. And if you don't feel better within six days * * * the Three-S Company will refund your money. Yes, yes, yes * * * get S.S.S. Tonic today * * * in liquid or tablet form. (CX 12.)

OPINION OF THE COMMISSION

By ELMAN, *Commissioner*:

I

The complaint in this matter, issued September 14, 1964, charges respondents, the S.S.S. Company, manufacturer of S.S.S. tonic and tablets, and Tucker Wayne & Company, advertising agency for these products, with having violated Sections 5 and 12 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 45, 52.

It is alleged that respondents made a number of false and misleading representations in selling their preparations. Among other charges, the complaint alleges that respondents represent that the S.S.S. preparations will be of benefit in treating tiredness symptoms without disclosing that relief will only be afforded those whose tiredness is attributable to iron deficiency, iron deficiency anemia or a deficiency of the vitamins contained in the preparations. Also challenged were representations that the S.S.S. preparations are new medical discoveries, will increase strength and energy within 24 hours, and are unconditionally guaranteed.¹ Respondents filed an answer admitting certain of the allegations in the complaint but denying that they had violated the Federal Trade Commission Act.

Extensive hearings were held after which the hearing examiner entered an initial decision upholding most of the allegations of the complaint and dismissing for want of evidence the charge that respondents failed to honor their guarantees. He entered an order similar to, but somewhat narrower than, the one requested by complaint counsel.

Respondents appeal from this decision contending primarily that their advertisements do not misrepresent the effectiveness of their products, that there is no adequate evidentiary basis in the record for imposing the affirmative disclosure requirements of the order, that portions of the order are contrary to the decision of the Court of Appeals in *J. B. Williams Co., Inc. v. Federal Trade Commission*,² a case similar to this one, and that portions of the order are vague or unsupported by the evidence. Complaint counsel challenge portions of the examiner's order as being too narrow and request that certain of the examiner's findings of fact be modified and that additional findings be made.

For the reasons stated below, we grant the appeal of complaint counsel in part, deny respondents' appeal, and modify the order. Except to the extent they are inconsistent with findings made in this opinion, the findings of the hearing examiner are amply supported by the record and are adopted as the findings of the Commission.

¹ A charge that since iron deficiency anemia is usually caused by bleeding from some serious disease or disorder, use of respondents' preparations "may mask the signs and symptoms of said deficiency or anemia and thereby permit the progression of such disease or disorder," was dropped from the complaint, on motion of complaint counsel, before any hearings were held.

² 381 F.2d 884 (6th Cir. 1967). That case involved Geritol, a widely advertised iron preparation.

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II

S.S.S. tonic and tablets contain iron, vitamins and various herbs for flavor. They are widely advertised and sold in the United States; sales volume is in excess of \$2 million annually. Respondents' advertisements of these preparations, the majority of which are radio announcements, follow a fairly standard format. Opening with questions emphasizing tiredness, lack of pep or spark, or absence of that "young blood feeling," the commercials go on to suggest that these symptoms are due to iron deficiency anemia, and state that the S.S.S. preparations will eliminate the problem, restoring energy and vitality, that the products will go to work within 24 hours, implying that their effects will be felt in that time, and that the purchase price will be refunded if the consumer does not feel better within six days.³

Having independently reviewed the challenged advertisements, we agree with the hearing examiner that the representations made, which are similar if not identical to those made in the *J. B. Williams* case, are false and misleading. These commercials strongly emphasize general tiredness symptoms that are felt by many people and claim that these symptoms can be alleviated or entirely eliminated by using the S.S.S. preparations. The examiner found that this claim was misleading because many people suffering from tiredness are not iron deficient and will derive no benefit from the S.S.S. preparations. However, respondents argue that since their advertisements also mention iron deficiency anemia—for example, some of the advertisements state that "if you've been tired, jumpy, run-down, due to iron deficiency anemia, S.S.S. will help you get that young blood feeling in just six days"—there can be no deception. We do not agree.

It is well settled that in determining the impression created by an advertisement "the Commission need not confine itself to the literal meaning of the words used but may look to the overall impact of the entire commercial"⁴ and that "the important criterion in determining

³ Typical of these announcements is the following:

"Do you find yourself *missing out* on the fun in life? Do you feel dull, draggy * * * just 'too tired' to do things? Then maybe you're suffering from Iron Deficiency Anemia—*low blood power*. If so, what you need is *Three-S Tonic*! New-formula Three-S Tonic—now with B-vitamins—is rich in iron to help *build back* your blood power * * * *restore* your energy * * * help you *feel better fast*! Three-S Tonic goes to work within *24 hours*. And if you don't feel better in just six days * * * the Three-S Company will refund your money * * * every cent of it! So don't *miss out* on the fun in life. Don't *let* yourself feel 'too tired' to enjoy things. If *you're* suffering from Iron Deficiency Anemia, take *Three-S Tonic*! Yes, yes, yes * * * get S.S.S.! Get started on new-formula, iron-and-vitamin-enriched Three-S Tonic * * * in liquid or tablet form * * * *right away!*" (CX 2.)

Other examples are appended to the initial decision of the hearing examiner.

⁴ *Garter Prods. Inc. v. Federal Trade Commission*, 323 F. 2d 523, 528 (5th Cir. 1963).

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the meaning of an advertisement is the net impression that it is likely to make on the general populace."⁵

There can be little doubt as to the impression that these advertisements are likely to make on the general populace. Each advertisement attempts to get the listener's attention by asking questions concerning tiredness and lack of pep and each then links these common nonspecific symptoms, felt by a great many people, with iron deficiency anemia. Despite the brief reference to iron deficiency, the overall impression created is that people who experience these symptoms are iron deficient or anemic and will benefit from the S.S.S. preparations.⁶

It is equally clear that this impression is false and misleading. While it is true that one deficient in iron or vitamins may benefit from taking these products, it is not true, and there is no basis in the record for inferring, that the tiredness symptoms which respondents stress so heavily are generally attributable to a deficiency of iron. Apart from the great number of perfectly healthy individuals who experience tiredness symptoms merely because they are bored or overworked, or for some other reason unrelated to disease or physical disorder,⁷ that "tired, rundown, dull, draggy feeling" is a symptom of many diseases or disorders, and is not peculiar to iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia.⁸ Indeed, a person suffering from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia may exhibit no tiredness symptoms⁹ and properly con-

⁵ *National Bakers Serv., Inc. v. Federal Trade Commission*, 329 F. 2d 365, 367 (7th Cir. 1964), citing *Aronberg v. Federal Trade Commission*, 132 F. 2d 165, 167 (7th Cir. 1942); see *Kalwaftys v. Federal Trade Commission*, 237 F. 2d 654, 656 (7th Cir. 1956), cert. denied, 353 U.S. 1025 (1957); *P. Lorillard Co. v. Federal Trade Commission*, 186 F. 2d 52, 58 (4th Cir. 1950); *Handler, The Control of False Advertising Under the Wheeler-Lea Act*, 6 Law & Contemp. Prob. 91, 99-102 (1939).

⁶ Respondents' advertisements also state or suggest that users of the S.S.S. products will begin to experience relief from these symptoms within 24 hours. As respondents concede (Appeal Br. p. 30) the examiner's finding that this representation is false, that "there can be no increase in strength or decrease in the tiredness symptoms within 24 hours attributable to" the S.S.S. preparations, is amply supported by the evidence and excision of this claim is proper. Initial decision p. 1076; see, e.g., R. 496, 503 (Dr. Darby); 656-57 (Dr. Ruffin). We note that the parties have agreed that there is an error in the fourth sentence of finding 27 on page 1076 of the initial decision, which is quoted above in part. The sentence is hereby amended to read:

"While some of the ingested iron would undoubtedly be absorbed and incorporated into the red blood cells in a matter of 24 hours, the testimony in the record makes it conclusive that there can be no increase in strength or decrease in the tiredness symptoms within 24 hours attributable to this."

⁷ See, e.g., R. 387 (Dr. S. Schwartz); 1090 (Dr. Briggs); 1651-52 (Dr. Beutler); 1746 (Dr. Arrowsmith); 1835 (Dr. McHardy).

⁸ See, e.g., R. 315 (Dr. Williams); 362 (Dr. Gendel); 387 (Dr. S. Schwartz); 1005 (Dr. Horwitz); 1090 (Dr. Briggs); 1390-91, 95 (Dr. H. Schwartz); 1658-59 (Dr. Beutler); 1834-35 (Dr. McHardy); 2147 (Dr. Holly); initial decision, pp. 1069, 1072.

⁹ See, e.g., R. 315 (Dr. Williams); 346 (Dr. Gendel); 388-89 (Dr. S. Schwartz); 833-34 (Dr. Halpern); 1149-50 (Dr. Rosenthal); 1391 (Dr. H. Schwartz); 1478 (Dr. Wallerstein); 1646, 1658-59 (Dr. Beutler); 1835 (Dr. McHardy).

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ducted medical and laboratory tests are almost always necessary to determine whether a patient is suffering from those conditions—accurate self-diagnosis by a layman is impossible.¹⁰

In short, the record makes clear that only a minority of people suffering from tiredness and lack of energy exhibit these symptoms because of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia; in most cases these symptoms are attributable to causes other than iron deficiency. Reviewing a record essentially similar to that in the instant case,¹¹ the Court of Appeals in the *J. B. Williams* case stated:

Not all of the approximate ten percent of the population who have iron deficiency anemia have moderate to severe anemia, and consequently exhibit mild or no symptoms. While there are no statistics available as to the number of people who are tired and run-down, or the number of people who are tired and run-down due to iron deficiency anemia, there is direct testimony that only a minority of people with these symptoms exhibit these symptoms because of iron deficiency anemia. Considering this evidence along with the fact that these symptoms are common and non-specific, the Commission could reasonably infer, and there was substantial evidence to support the finding, that the majority of the people who have these symptoms, have them because of causes other than iron deficiency anemia. (381 F. 2d at 889.)

We conclude that by creating the false impression that the S.S.S. preparations are a quick remedy and are useful and beneficial for all or many of those persons experiencing the common, nonspecific tiredness symptoms, which are widely—indeed, almost universally—felt in our society, respondents' advertisements have violated the Federal Trade Commission Act.

III

A number of additional grounds are put forward by respondents to support their contention that their advertisements are not misleading and that entry of an order similar to that entered by the hearing examiner would be improper. They argue that their advertised money back guarantee, promising the purchaser that if he does not feel better within six days he can get a full refund of the purchase price, adequately puts potential customers on notice that "there do exist tiredness symptoms which will not be relieved by the S.S.S. preparations."¹² They contend, further, that since the guarantee was apparently honored, dissatisfied customers would suffer no economic loss.

¹⁰ See, e.g., R. 346-52 (Dr. Gendel); 543 (Dr. Darby); 867-68 (Dr. Halpern); 1076-77 (Dr. Briggs); 1358-59 (Dr. H. Schwartz); 1650 (Dr. Beutler); 1960 (Dr. Teem); 2148-49 (Dr. Holly); initial decision, p. 1069.

¹¹ A number of the same experts who testified in that proceeding also testified here and none of those who appeared changed his testimony in any way even tangentially material, nor do the views of those experts differ significantly from the views of most of the experts who appeared only in this proceeding.

¹² Appeal Br. p. 7.

We need not dwell long on these arguments. The advertised guarantee is more likely to be regarded by the public not as minimizing or qualifying the claims made for the product but as bolstering those claims, creating the impression that the representations as to the efficacy of the S.S.S. products are so certain and accurate that the seller can confidently offer such a guarantee.¹³ Far from curing any deception, the statements concerning the guarantee contribute to the false and misleading impression created by the advertisements.

Moreover, there is no merit to the notion that the availability of a refund permits sellers to make any inflated, fabricated, or untrue claims for their products that they wish. On that theory, respondents would be free to proclaim their S.S.S. preparations to be a cure for colds, cancer, or any other ailment, and, by offering a refund, escape any liability under the Federal Trade Commission Act. Human nature and inertia being what it is, many people who buy the S.S.S. preparations and get no benefits therefrom will not bother to seek a refund, simply accepting their loss or chalking it up to experience.¹⁴ If respondent's view of the law were correct, it would be possible to market a worthless product and make a profit based on the difference between selling costs and the number of refunds granted. We hold that the offer of a money-back guarantee does not in any way cure or overcome the deception involved in respondents' advertising.

Respondents next contend that there are numerous errors and defects in the order entered by the hearing examiner. The order requires respondents to cease and desist from representing that:

The use of [the S.S.S.] * * * preparations will be of benefit in the prevention, relief or treatment of tiredness, lack of pep, energy or strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling or nervousness, or any other symptom unless such representation be expressly limited to a symptom or symptoms caused by a deficiency of one or more of the vitamins or iron provided by that preparation; and, further, unless such advertisement discloses clearly and conspicuously, in immediate or close proximity, and with equal prominence that in the majority of persons suffering from any such symptom or symptoms, the preparations will be of no benefit in the prevention, treatment or relief of such symptom or symptoms.

¹³ For example, one advertisement (CX 12) states: "Three-S Tonic helps you feel better *fast*. It goes to work within 24 hours! Yes, yes, yes * * * S.S.S. makes it a promise. If you don't feel better in just *six days*, your money will be refunded by the Three-S Company!" The Commission is not unfamiliar with such use of an advertised guarantee as an affirmative representation of material facts. See, e.g., Guides Against Deceptive Advertising of Guarantees, Part VII (1960).

¹⁴ It is for this reason that we reject respondents' argument that their advertising causes no economic loss. We reach this conclusion quite apart from the obvious fact that respondents' false advertising, by diverting sales from respondents' competitors in commerce, constitutes an unfair method of competition proscribed by Section 5.

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Respondents argue that imposition of these affirmative disclosure requirements would be an abuse of discretion since this is not an extreme case and since their products are not dangerous.¹⁵ They contend that the record does not support the conclusion that such disclosures are necessary. Complaint counsel argue, on the other hand, that the order should be modified to require disclosure that the preparations will be of no benefit to the "great majority" of persons suffering from tiredness symptoms.

It is clear that an order requiring affirmative disclosures is not an extraordinary or unusual remedy to be applied only in extreme cases. Even if it were, we think that such disclosures should properly be ordered here. Affirmative disclosures are appropriate whenever reasonably necessary to prevent deception and not merely when the product involved is dangerous.¹⁶

The overwhelming weight of the evidence in the record supports the examiner's conclusion that any representations that the S.S.S. products are helpful in treating the tiredness symptoms must be accompanied by affirmative disclosure both that these products are of value only in combatting tiredness caused by a deficiency of the iron or vitamins that they provide and that the great majority of persons experiencing tiredness symptoms will derive no benefit from these products.¹⁷ Indeed, our review of the record confirms that, if anything, the examiner's findings, which are now attacked by respondents, concerning the prevalence of iron deficiency in the United States are overly generous to respondents.

In considering this question it is necessary to draw a distinction between prevalence of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia—that is, the number or percentage of persons in a particular group suffering from these conditions at any given point of time¹⁸—which is the important statistic for present purposes, and the incidence or cumulative incidence of these disorders—that is, the number of new cases occurring within a particular group over a period of time. As the examiner found and as virtually all the witnesses testified, iron defi-

¹⁵ Complaint counsel have argued on this appeal that the examiner erred in finding that the S.S.S. preparations are safe and effective in the treatment of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia. We find no need, however, to reexamine or review the examiner's finding in this regard.

¹⁶ See, e.g., *Ward Laboratories, Inc. v. Federal Trade Commission*, 276 F. 2d 952, 954-55 (2d Cir.), cert. denied, 364 U.S. 827 (1960); *Keele Hair & Scalp Specialists, Inc. v. Federal Trade Commission*, 275 F. 2d 18, 23 (5th Cir. 1966); see also Federal Trade Commission, Statement of Basis and Purpose Accompanying the Trade Regulation Rule for the Prevention of Unfair or Deceptive Advertising and Labeling of Cigarettes 87-89 (1964).

¹⁷ We hold, *infra*, that other disclosures are also necessary when such representations are made.

¹⁸ Some of the witnesses referred to this concept not as prevalence but as "incidence at any one time."

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ciency or iron deficiency anemia is virtually nonexistent among adult males; no more than one or at best two percent of this group ever incurs iron deficiency, and the number afflicted with this condition at any one time is extremely small. There is also little doubt that iron deficiency is infrequent among infants and children.

On the other hand, while iron deficiency is found most frequently among women of childbearing age, there is some conflict in the record as to its exact prevalence. There is evidence that the prevalence of the condition in this group is insubstantial,¹⁹ but there is also evidence that its cumulative incidence may be 10-20 percent²⁰ or even as high as 30-40 percent.²¹ The examiner's finding that approximately ten percent of this group may be iron deficient at any one time may be a little high, but the evidence is not so clear that we think it necessary to reject his finding. Finally, we accept the examiner's finding that the maximum prevalence of iron deficiency in post-menopausal females is ten percent, although here again we think this figure may be too generous to respondents.²²

Since the evidence if anything is even less favorable to respondents than the evidence in the *J. B. Williams* case, we adhere to the conclusion reached in that case that at any given time less, and probably a great deal less, than ten percent of the entire population suffers from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia.

In the face of this evidence, respondents' argument that the record does not support the conclusion that the great majority of persons who suffer from tiredness symptoms are not suffering from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia borders on the frivolous. We recognize that iron deficiency is, medically speaking, not uncommon or rare, that it afflicts more people than do a number of other well known diseases or conditions, and that it may be a public health problem. We also do not question that treatment with iron preparations, even preparations containing fewer ingredients than S.S.S. tonic or tablets and costing less,²³ may be a relatively safe and effective means for dealing

¹⁹ See, e.g., R. 554-56 (Dr. Darby).

²⁰ See, e.g., R. 1447 (Dr. Wallerstein).

²¹ See, e.g., R. 1612-13, 1658 (Dr. Beutler); 1984 (Dr. Brewer); Dr. Beutler gave these incidence figures for women of childbearing age in low-income groups. He estimated the prevalence of iron deficiency among well-to-do women as "perhaps five or six percent" (R. 1612-13) and the prevalence among poor women as 20-30 percent. R. 1658.

²² See, e.g., R. 1053 (incidence is one percent in post-menopausal females and adult males) (Dr. Briggs); 1613, 1658 (incidence drops off to under ten percent or under five percent within a few years of menopause) (Dr. Beutler); 1795-96 (incidence ten to twelve percent in women over age 60) (Dr. McHardy).

²³ See, e.g., R. 1002-03 (Dr. Horowitz). Asked whether he prescribed or would prescribe the S.S.S. preparation for his patients, this witness, called by respondents, replied:

"No. * * * I think they are getting a lot that is unnecessary. If the problem is iron deficiency, then I don't think that the additional vitamins are beneficial and I don't feel the need to burden them with the cost."

See also R. 2140 (Dr. Holly).

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with this condition. This proceeding is not intended to, and will not, drive the S.S.S. preparations off the market, depriving consumers of a useful remedy for iron deficiency. However, when the products are represented not as a cure for iron deficiency but as a treatment for tiredness and lack of pep, both the fact that they will be of no benefit to the great majority of persons suffering from such symptoms and the fact that they are useful only to those persons whose symptoms are due to these disorders or to a deficiency of the vitamins contained in the S.S.S. preparations, are clearly material and must be disclosed. As the court held in the *J. B. Williams* case:

The fact that the great majority of people who experience tiredness symptoms do not suffer from any deficiency of the ingredients in Geritol is a "material fact" under the meaning of that term as used in Section 15 of the Federal Trade Commission Act and Petitioners' failure to reveal this fact in this day when the consumer is influenced by mass advertising utilizing highly developed arts of persuasion, renders it difficult for the typical consumer to know whether the product will in fact meet his needs unless he is told what the product will or will not do. This does not fall within the sphere of negative advertising, it merely presents to the consumer an opportunity to make an intelligent choice. 381 F.2d at 890 (footnote omitted).

Respondents argue that, even if otherwise permissible, these affirmative disclosure provisions of the order subvert the Congressional policy favoring self-medication on a trial-and-error basis. They contend that other provisions of the order dealing with self-diagnosis of iron or vitamin deficiency²⁴ fly in the face of that policy, as it was expressed in the opinion of the Court of Appeals in the *J. B. Williams* case. Discussing a prohibition similar to the self-diagnosis provisions here at issue, the court said:

The danger to be remedied here has been fully and adequately taken care of in the other requirements of the Order. We can find no Congressional policy against self-medication on a trial and error basis where the consumer is fully informed and the product is safe as Geritol is conceded to be. In fact, Congressional policy is to encourage such self-help. In effect the Commission's Order 1(f) tends to place Geritol in the prescription drug field. We do not consider it within the power of the Federal Trade Commission to remove Geritol from the area of proprietary drugs and place it in the area of prescription drugs. 381 F.2d at 891.

In analyzing this question, it is necessary to distinguish between self-diagnosis and self-medication. The two concepts are not the same. Self-

²⁴ Sections 1(c)-1(f) of the order.

diagnosis may be possible for a condition for which self-medication is impossible. For example, a layman who has suffered a compound leg fracture can readily observe it but is unable to treat or remedy the condition. On the other hand, self-medication may be perfectly appropriate for a condition which cannot be self-diagnosed. A diabetic may treat himself with insulin but this fact does not indicate that diabetes may be self-diagnosed.

As we have noted, the evidence in this case overwhelmingly supports the conclusion that iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia cannot be self-diagnosed.²⁵ The evidence also supports the examiner's parallel conclusion that vitamin deficiency is virtually nonexistent and "cannot properly be diagnosed without medical tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician."²⁶ Representations to the contrary are false and deceptive and cannot be condoned on the ground that Congressional policy favors self-medication on a trial-and-error basis. Provisions in the examiner's order forbidding respondents from making such false representations, even when their advertisements do not mention tiredness, are necessary and will be included in the final order. Nor do we believe that a prohibition of such representations, which is essential if the Commission's order is to be effective in protecting the public and insuring that purchasers of respondents' products are fully informed before buying, will place the S.S.S. preparations in the prescription drug field. Nothing in the order will prohibit respondents from representing that the S.S.S. preparations are effective in treating a properly diagnosed case of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia. On the contrary, our order is intended to encourage respondents to utilize truthful representations such as these instead of relying on falsehoods, misstatements, or half-truths that are misleading because material facts are omitted.

For similar reasons, we reject respondents' argument that requiring affirmative disclosure of all material facts when the S.S.S. preparations are advertised as remedies for tiredness interferes with the Congressional policy favoring self-medication. The short answer to this contention is that the very authority that respondents cite in support of this proposition, the opinion of the Court of Appeals in the *J. B. Williams* case, upholds an order including disclosure provisions similar to those here challenged by respondents.²⁷ Moreover, in addition to upholding the disclosure provisions of the order, the court indi-

²⁵ See notes 7-10, *supra*; initial decision pp. 1069, 1072.

²⁶ See initial decision, p. 1075.

²⁷ See p. 1090, *supra*.

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cated that the Congressional policy referred to extended only to "self-medication on a trial and error basis where the consumer is fully informed and the product is safe as Geritol is conceded to be." 381 F.2d at 891.

The purpose of the disclosure provisions in this order, as in the *J. B. Williams* order, is to insure that the consumer is in fact fully informed. Respondents' advertisements create the false impression that tiredness is generally or frequently attributable to iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia. In effect, when the reader is asked to draw the conclusion that his tiredness is attributable to iron deficiency, he is being asked to engage in self-diagnosis. We do not hold in this case that such an invitation to self-diagnosis is prohibited. However, we agree with the court in the *J. B. Williams* case that where an advertisement for a proprietary drug seeks to sell the product on the basis of such self-diagnosis, the consumer must be fully and honestly informed of the material facts.

If self-medication is to be encouraged, it is important that there not be a wrong diagnosis. If each of us is invited to become his own doctor and to choose among the various remedies offered for sale to the public, a clear obligation rests on the seller to disclose all the relevant facts concerning his product, including its dangers if any and the limits of its efficacy. This need is illustrated by the present case, where respondents admit that among the principal groups to whom their advertising is directed are the urban and rural poor—who are less likely to get the medical attention they need, who are more likely to be uneducated and uninformed, and who are thus most likely to be victimized by improper self-medication resulting from false and misleading advertising.

We are adding to paragraph 1(a) of the order, which deals with the tiredness symptoms, the requirement that when the S.S.S. products are represented as a cure for tiredness, or as a cure for vitamin or iron deficiency causing tiredness, respondents must also disclose that such deficiencies cannot be self-diagnosed but can be determined only by medical or laboratory tests conducted by or under the supervision of a doctor. Our order will require respondents to disclose all the material facts when their advertisements invite people to conclude that their tiredness is related to an iron or vitamin deficiency which can be remedied by the S.S.S. products.

We repeat that the order is not intended to discourage the sale of respondents' products, but to encourage that they be advertised truthfully and honestly. Where a seller of a proprietary drug, or any other

product, confines himself to such advertising, he serves his own as well as the public interest.

IV

We now turn to the remaining questions, all of which concern the scope of the order. Prohibition 1(b) of the hearing examiner's order bars respondents from representing that their preparations will be of benefit in the treatment of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia in any particular population group unless there is a reasonable probability that a majority of persons within such group suffers from these disorders. This section of the order is designed to prevent respondents from falsely representing expressly or by implication that particular groups are likely to have a need for their products. For example, the statement "Men over thirty—take S.S.S. Tonic for iron deficiency" falsely suggests that men over thirty are likely to need iron and to benefit from the S.S.S. preparation. On the other hand, we agree with the examiner that advertising directed to a population group in which the prevalence of iron deficiency is high would not be deceptive in this respect. In order to permit respondents sufficient flexibility if they choose to direct their advertising appeals to particular groups we have added a second proviso to the order entered by the examiner. If respondents show either that their advertising is directed to a population group the majority of which is reasonably likely to be iron deficient or that their advertising does no more than truthfully and accurately represent the percentage of people in the group addressed who are likely to be suffering from iron deficiency, this section of the order would not be violated.

Respondents argue that placing on them the burden of proving that their advertisements fall within one of these provisos in any enforcement proceeding is impermissible. We do not agree. The record indicates that it is likely that there is no major population group the majority of whose members are iron deficient at any one time. The record and our own extensive experience with deceptive advertising also suggest that appeals directed to any particular population group could easily, even if inadvertently, create a false or misleading impression as to the need of members of that group for the S.S.S. products. Rather than broadly forbid all such representations we have decided to draw the order more selectively, permitting respondents sufficient leeway so that they may make honest representations concerning the need for their products. However, if this provision is not to become a nullity, and if this entire proceeding is not to be rendered nugatory, the burden of proving the truth of any such representations must be on respond-

ents. Answering an argument similar to that made by these respondents, the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit stated:

We will add, however, in view of the strenuous opposition expressed by respondent * * * to the so-called "imposition of a burden" of showing extenuation, that respondent has misconceived the principle. The Commission has allowed it an escape, rather than imposed a burden. *Colgate-Palmolive Co. v. Federal Trade Commission*, 326 F. 2d 517, 523 (1st Cir. 1963).

On appeal, the order involved in that case was upheld by the Supreme Court.²⁸ We conclude that it is not unfair to hold respondents to account if they choose to walk perilously close to the line separating legal from illegal conduct. "Having been caught violating the Act, respondents 'must expect some fencing in.'" ²⁹

Respondents also challenge provisions of the order forbidding any misrepresentations concerning the efficacy of the vitamins and herbs in the S.S.S. preparations in treating iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia and barring any misrepresentations as to the need for those ingredients among persons suffering from iron deficiency. These provisions are said to be unsupported by the evidence and unduly vague.

As the examiner found, the evidence does not support respondents' contention below, not pressed on this appeal, that the vitamin C found in the S.S.S. preparations enhances the absorption of iron.³⁰ Nor does the evidence establish that persons suffering from iron deficiency are also likely to need vitamins. The evidence does establish, on the other hand, that iron, and only iron, is effective in treating iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia—the administration of other drugs, herbs, or vitamins, is unnecessary.³¹ Yet respondents have represented in the advertising and labeling for their products that the S.S.S. preparations are an effective remedy for tiredness and iron deficiency in part because they are "vitamin fortified" or "vitamin enriched," that the elements in S.S.S. including the vitamins "help *build back* your blood power," that S.S.S. contains "essential vitamins and special natural ingredients to help restore vim and vigor" and that the S.S.S. preparations also provide "the activity of S.S.S. Drug Extractives from Queen's Delight, Swamp Sumac and Sumac."³²

²⁸ *Federal Trade Commission v. Colgate-Palmolive Co.*, 380 U.S. 374 (1965).

²⁹ *Federal Trade Commission v. Colgate-Palmolive Co.*, *supra*, at 395, quoting *Federal Trade Commission v. National Lead Co.*, 352 U.S. 419, 431 (1957); see *Federal Trade Commission v. Ruberoid Co.*, 343 U.S. 470, 473-75 (1952).

³⁰ Initial Decision pp. 7075-76: see R. 228 (Dr. Williams); 563 (Dr. Darby); 970, 1015 (Dr. Horowitz); 1653-55 (Dr. Beutler); 2066-67 (Dr. Clements); 2140-41 (Dr. Holly).

³¹ See, e.g., R. 363 (Dr. Gendel); 407 (Dr. S. Schwartz); 1002-03 (Dr. Horowitz); 1451-52 (Dr. Wallerstein); 2066-67 (Dr. Clements); 2140-41 (Dr. Holly).

³² See, e.g., CX 4, 6, 7, 11, 13A.

These advertisements clearly imply both that the vitamins or other ingredients in S.S.S. tonic and tablets, in addition to the iron contained in these preparations, contribute to the effectiveness of these preparations in treating, relieving, or curing tiredness or iron deficiency and that persons suffering from tiredness or iron deficiency are especially likely to suffer from vitamin deficiency. In consequence, the impression is created that, for one reason or another, vitamins will be of benefit to persons to whom the advertising is addressed. The order is narrowly and carefully drawn to proscribe these false and deceptive representations. While we fail to see in what respect the order may be regarded as vague, we point out that if respondents entertain any doubts as to what is required of them they are free to consult informally with the Commission's staff or to utilize the advisory opinion procedure under Section 3.61(c) of the Commission's Rules to obtain a definitive construction of the Commission's order without risking a civil penalty proceeding.

Finally, we must consider issues raised by the appeal of complaint counsel. The principal question before us is whether the order should require respondents to disclose in their advertising that "in adults, other than pregnant women, iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia almost never develops in the absence of bleeding, hidden or obvious." Of the four principal causes of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia enumerated by the hearing examiner,³³ it seems clear, and we find, that excessive loss of iron through bleeding is by far the most common among adults other than pregnant women.³⁴ However, since bleeding may be, and in many cases is, hidden, a person suffering iron deficiency due to excessive blood loss may be unaware that he is losing blood and that he may be suffering from anemia. The purpose of our order is to require respondents truthfully to represent their products so that consumers may make an informed judgment in deciding whether to purchase the S.S.S. preparations. Since blood loss frequently is not manifest, disclosure that anemia is most often attributable to blood loss would not enhance the effectiveness of the order in achieving that objective. Moreover, in view of complaint counsel's decision to strike from the complaint the so-called "masking" charge which was predicated in part on the same facts as are relied on to support the contentions under discussion, we are somewhat reluctant to reintroduce the issue obliquely on this appeal.

³³ These are inadequate intake of iron, poor absorption of iron, excessive demand for iron, and excessive loss of iron from the body through bleeding. See initial decision, pp. 1071-1072.

³⁴ See, e.g., R. 368-69 (Dr. Gendel); 405-06 (Dr. S. Schwartz); 538-39 (Dr. Darby); 1217 (Dr. Trobaugh); 1387 (Dr. H. Schwartz).

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On the other hand, the record amply supports the conclusion that the herbs in respondents' preparations are of no therapeutic value despite respondents' representations to the contrary.³⁵ We therefore agree with complaint counsel that representations as to the therapeutic value of these herbs should be forbidden.

The appeal of respondents is denied. The appeal of complaint counsel is granted in part and denied in part. The findings and conclusions of the hearing examiner, except to the extent they are inconsistent with this opinion, are adopted as the findings and conclusions of the Commission. The examiner's order is modified and, as so modified, adopted as the order of the Commission.

FINAL ORDER

This matter has been heard by the Commission on the cross-appeals of complaint counsel and respondents from the initial decision of the hearing examiner filed on October 13, 1967. The Commission has rendered its decision denying respondents' appeal in all respects, granting complaint counsel's appeal in part, and adopting the findings of the hearing examiner to the extent that they are not inconsistent with the opinion accompanying this order. Other findings of fact and conclusions of law made by the Commission are contained in that opinion. For the reasons therein stated, the Commission has determined that the order entered by the hearing examiner should be modified and, as so modified, adopted and issued by the Commission as its final order. Accordingly,

It is ordered, That respondents S.S.S. Company, a corporation, and Tucker Wayne & Company, a corporation, and their officers, and respondents' representatives, agents and employees, directly or through any corporate or other device, in connection with the offering for sale, sale, or distribution of the preparation designated "S.S.S. Tonic" or the preparation designated "S.S.S. Tablets," or any other preparation of substantially similar composition or possessing substantially similar properties, do forthwith cease and desist from directly or indirectly:

1. Disseminating or causing the dissemination of, by any means in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, any advertisement which represents, directly or by implication, that:

- (a) The use of such preparations will be of benefit in the prevention, relief or treatment of tiredness, lack of pep,

³⁵ Compare Respondents' Proposed Finding of Fact 5 with CX 13A.

energy or strength, weakness, listlessness, run-down feeling or nervousness, or any other symptom, unless such representation is expressly limited to a symptom or symptoms caused by a deficiency of one or more of the vitamins or iron provided by such preparations; and, further, unless such advertisement also discloses clearly and conspicuously, in immediate or close proximity, and with equal prominence, to any such representations:

(1) That, in the great majority of persons suffering from any such symptom or symptoms, the preparations will be of no benefit in the prevention, treatment or relief of such symptom or symptoms; and

(2) That the presence of iron deficiency anemia or iron deficiency of any degree cannot be self-diagnosed and can be determined only by means of medical or laboratory tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician; and

(3) That the presence of a deficiency of the B vitamins, or of any vitamin, cannot be self-diagnosed and can be determined only by means of medical or laboratory tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician.

(b) The use of such preparations will be of benefit in the prevention, relief or treatment of iron or vitamin deficiency or iron deficiency anemia in any specific or described group of people: *Provided, however*, That it shall be a defense in any enforcement proceeding instituted under this prohibition for respondents affirmatively to show:

(1) That there is a reasonable probability that a majority of persons within such group suffers from iron or vitamin deficiency or iron deficiency anemia; or

(2) That their advertising did no more than truthfully and accurately represent the percentage of persons in a specific population group who suffer from iron or vitamin deficiency or iron deficiency anemia.

(c) The presence of iron deficiency anemia or iron deficiency of any degree can be self-diagnosed.

(d) The presence of iron deficiency anemia or iron deficiency of any degree can generally be determined without medical or laboratory tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician.

(e) The presence of a deficiency of the B vitamins, or of any vitamin, can be self-diagnosed.

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(f) The presence of a deficiency of the B vitamins, or of any vitamin, can generally be determined without medical tests conducted by or under the supervision of a physician.

(g) Any ingredient other than iron in S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets contributes to the effectiveness of these or similar preparations in the prevention, relief or treatment of iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia or of symptoms represented directly or by implication to be caused by iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia.

(h) There is any greater need for any one or more of the vitamins in S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets among persons suffering from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia than among persons not suffering from iron deficiency or iron deficiency anemia.

(i) The use of such preparations will increase the strength or energy of any part of the body in any period or amount of time less than that in which the consumer may actually experience improvement.

(j) The formula of S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets is "new" or the formulae or ingredients are new medical or scientific discoveries or achievements.

(k) The herbs in S.S.S. Tonic or S.S.S. Tablets are of any therapeutic benefit or value.

2. Disseminating, or causing to be disseminated, by means of the United States mails or by any means in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, any advertisements which contain statements which are inconsistent with, negate, contradict, or dilute any of the affirmative disclosures required by Paragraph 1 of this Order, or which in any way obscure the meaning or effect of such required disclosures.

3. Disseminating, or causing to be disseminated, by any means, for the purpose of inducing, or which is likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of any such preparation in commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act, any advertisement which contains any of the representations prohibited by Paragraphs 1 or 2 hereof, or which fails to comply with the affirmative requirements of Paragraph 1 hereof.

It is further ordered, That the respondents herein shall, within sixty (60) days after service upon them of this order, file with the Commission a written report setting forth in detail the manner and form of their compliance with this order.

Complaint

IN THE MATTER OF

THE SPERRY AND HUTCHINSON COMPANY

ORDER, OPINIONS, ETC., IN REGARD TO THE ALLEGED VIOLATION OF
THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION ACT*Docket 8671. Complaint, Nov. 15, 1965—Decision, June 26, 1968*

Order requiring the Nation's largest trading stamp company to cease setting a maximum number of stamps to be dispensed by its retail licensees in relation to the price of the goods sold, conspiring with others to enforce its policy of limitation, and suppressing the operation of trading stamp exchanges and other stamp redemption activity.

COMPLAINT

The Federal Trade Commission, having reason to believe that the Sperry and Hutchinson Company, a corporation, hereinafter referred to as respondent, has violated and is now violating the provisions of Section 5(a)(1) of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45(a)(1), 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 with respect thereto as follows:

1. *DEFINITIONS.* For the purposes of this complaint, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) "Trading stamps" are small, gummed pieces of paper about the size of postage stamps, bearing on their face the name, trademark, or like insignia of the company which originally issued them. Customarily, retail merchants dispense them to their customers in connection with the sale of goods or furnishing of services, pursuant to the terms and conditions of contracts between such merchants and the company from which they secured the stamps.

(b) "Redemption of trading stamps" is the exchange of goods, wares, or merchandise, referred to at times hereinafter as "redemption merchandise," for trading stamps. Such redemption customarily takes place at a "redemption store."

(c) A "trading stamp company" is a firm engaged in the business of issuing and selling trading stamps to retail merchants and of redeeming such stamps from the customers of such merchants. The respondent herein is a trading stamp company.

(d) A "contracting retailer" is a retail merchant or business man who has entered into a contract with a trading stamp company, pursuant to the terms and conditions of which contract such retail merchant or businessman purchases trading stamps from such trading stamp company and dispenses them to members of the consuming pub-