GREGORY GLYNN, Cal. Bar # 039999 LISA A. GOK, Cal. Bar # 147660 DAVID J. VAN HAVERMAAT, Cal. Bar #175761 3 Attorneys for Plaintiff Securities and Exchange Commission 4 Valerie Caproni, Regional Director 5 5670 Wilshire Boulevard, 11th Floor Los Angeles, California 90036-3648 Phone: (323) 965-3998 Fax: (323) 965-3908 7 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 8 FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA 9 SOUTHERN DIVISION 10 Case No. SACV 00-12 AHS (AUx) SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION, 11 12 Plaintiff, COMPLAINT FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE FEDERAL SECURITIES LAWS 13 VS. 14 CURRENCY TRADING INTERNATIONAL INC., BRIAN R. MOORE, CRAIG A. CUNNINGHAM, CRAIG WIGINTON, JAMES R. KELSALL, CHRISTIAN J. WEBER and ROBERT SHANE 16 JONES, 17 Defendants. 18 19 Plaintiff Securities and Exchange Commission (the 20 21 "Commission") alleges: JURISDICTION AND VENUE 22 This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant 23 to Sections 20(b), 20(d)(1), and 22(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 24 ("Securities Act") [15 U.S.C. §§ 77t(b), 77t(d)(1), and 77v(a)] and Sections 21(d)(1), 21(d)(3)(A), 21(e), and 27 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Exchange Act") [15 U.S.C. §§ 78u(d)(1), 27 28 78u(d)(3)(A), 78u(e), and 78aa]. Venue is proper in the Central

1 SANDRA J. HARRIS, Cal. Bar # 134153

District of California because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claim occurred in this District.

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The Commission has jurisdiction over this action 2. pursuant to Section 2(1) of the Securities Act and Section 3(a)(10) of the Exchange Act. The foreign currency options offered and sold by Currency Trading International, Inc. are securities because they were traded on the Philadelphia Stock Exchange.

#### SUMMARY

- 3. Beginning in 1994, Currency Trading International, Inc. ("CTI"), a registered broker-dealer, engaged in fraudulent sales practices in connection with the offer and sale of foreign currency options. From 1994 through late 1998, CTI's registered representatives placed aggressive cold calls, mostly to small business owners in several states, soliciting them to invest in foreign currency options through CTI. The registered representatives orally misrepresented to clients the potential profits associated with foreign currency options trading, often telling clients they were likely to double or triple their investment within a short time. Such high returns were extremely unlikely due to the speculative nature of foreign currency options and to the high commissions charged by CTI on both the purchase and sale of each option. Additionally, at the times these statements were made, it was CTI's usual practice to refuse client instructions to sell positions and to refuse to return funds to clients.
- 4. Defendants Brian R. Moore ("Moore"), Craig A. Cunningham ("Cunningham"), Craig Wiginton ("Wiginton"), James R. Kelsall ("Kelsall"), and Robert Shane Jones ("Jones") directed the 28 registered representatives they trained and supervised to make these

fraudulent misrepresentations. In addition, Cunningham, Wiginton, 11 Kelsall, Jones and defendant Christian J. Weber ("Weber") each directly made fraudulent misrepresentations to CTI investors. CTI, Moore, Cunningham, Wiginton, Kelsall, Weber and Jones are sometimes referred to collectively herein as "Defendants."

The Commission seeks permanent injunctions, disgorgement and civil penalties against the Defendants.

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#### THE DEFENDANTS

- 6. Currency Trading International, Inc. is a Florida corporation, formed in 1993 and wholly owned by Moore and Cunningham. Its principal office was in Newport Beach, California. At various times from late 1994 to late 1998, CTI had other operating offices in San Diego, California, Irvine, California, Cleveland, Ohio, and Akron, Ohio.
- 7. CTI became registered with the Commission as a broker-dealer in December 1993 and was a foreign currency options participant on the Philadelphia Stock Exchange ("PHLX") from late 1994 through at least late 1998. CTI's business consisted of soliciting clients, mostly through cold calling, to purchase foreign currency options traded on the PHLX.
- CTI closed its last office and ceased conducting business in late 1998, after Bear Stearns, its clearing firm, canceled its clearing arrangement with CTI. CTI has not withdrawn its registration with the Commission.
- 9. Brian R. Moore resides in Bath, Ohio. Moore owns 50% 25 of CTI, is CTI's president, and was CTI's chief compliance officer. Moore also trained and supervised CTI's registered representatives 28 and managed CTI's operations.

Cunningham owns 50% of CTI and is CTI's vice-president. From the summer of 1994 through October 1996, Cunningham directly solicited CTI's clients, trained and supervised CTI's registered representatives and managed CTI's operations. From October 1996 until at least late 1998, Cunningham ceased direct solicitations and undertook compliance responsibilities in addition to his supervisory and management roles.

11. Craig Wiginton resides in Anaheim, California.
Wiginton worked at CTI as a registered representative from January
1995 until the fall of 1997, when he became the sales manager of
CTI's Newport Beach office. Wiginton held his sales manager
position until CTI closed in late 1998.

- 12. James R. Kelsall resides in Barberton, Ohio. Kelsall worked as a sales manager in CTI's Akron, Ohio office from the fall of 1996 until May 1997 and then as a sales manager of its Cleveland, Ohio office until January 1998.
- 13. Christian J. Weber resides in Huntington Beach,
  California. Weber worked as a registered representative at CTI from
  June 1997 until December 1997 and then as a regional manager of CTI
  until January 1998. As CTI's regional manager, Weber traveled among
  CTI's operating offices. He contacted existing clients, including
  clients whom other registered representatives could not convince to
  trade, and convinced some of them to deposit substantial additional
  sums of money with CTI.
- 14. Robert Shane Jones resides in Fairlawn, Ohio. Jones worked as a registered representative at CTI from 1996 until mid-

1997. From mid-1997 until January 1998, he worked as a sales manager at CTI's Akron, Ohio office.

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### ALLEGATIONS COMMON TO ALL CLAIMS FOR RELIEF CTI's High Pressure Sales Environment

- CTI solicited mostly small business owners in Ohio, Georgia, California and Colorado. Many of CTI's clients were unsophisticated investors. Most clients were unfamiliar with foreign currency options when they were solicited by CTI, and some had no prior investment experience.
- 16. Most of CTI's registered representatives had little or no experience with investments, knew nothing about foreign currency options, and were not licensed to solicit clients when CTI hired them. Most were trained exclusively at CTI. Registered representatives in each office worked in one large room, directly supervised by Moore or Cunningham or a sales manager.
- In 1996, when CTI opened branch offices in San Diego, Cleveland and Akron, Moore and Cunningham hired sales managers, including Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones, to supervise CTI's registered representatives directly. Moore and Cunningham continued to have direct contact with CTI's registered representatives even while sales managers were supervising the registered representatives. While working as sales managers, Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones continued to solicit clients directly. Moore, Cunningham and their sales managers, including Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones, hired, fired, trained and disciplined CTI's employees.
- Under the direction of Moore, Cunningham or the sales managers, some registered representatives made 200 to 300 cold calls 28 each day. Registered representatives who were designated as

"openers" dialed the call and spoke until the prospective client either hung up or indicated an interest in what the registered representative said. Registered representatives who were skilled at generating commissions were designated as "closers." They took the call when a prospective client indicated interest and pushed the prospective client to open an account. Some registered representatives also handled accounts for existing clients.

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- In morning meetings and while supervising registered representatives on the sales floor, Moore, Cunningham, Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones directed the sales pitches. At various times, Moore, Cunningham, Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones stood over registered representatives who were on the telephone and told them what to tell clients and prospective clients. Registered representatives who did not relay their statements word for word were reprimanded or fired.
- Registered representatives worked in an environment of intimidation and under a constant threat of being fired. Moore put extreme pressure on the registered representatives to generate high commissions. Moore and Cunningham and their sales managers, including Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones, frequently took client accounts away from registered representatives who did not generate high commissions and gave them to other registered representatives. Registered representatives who did not generate high commissions were insulted, screamed at and sworn at in front of the other employees, while registered representatives who generated high commissions were well paid and publicly praised as good examples. Moore and Cunningham determined compensation for all employees. including commissions and bonuses for the registered 28 representatives.

On several occasions when Moore was dissatisfied with the commissions that an office was generating, he forced its registered representatives to stand while they worked. On one occasion, unhappy with an office's performance, Moore made its registered representatives kneel on the floor while he screamed obscenities at them.

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Moore determined all of CTI's daily trading recommendations. Moore, Cunningham or their sales managers relayed CTI's daily trading recommendations to the registered representatives at a meeting that took place in the morning of each business day. No registered representative was allowed to recommend anything other than Moore's recommendations, and no client was allowed to make a trade that was not recommended by Moore. Moore or Cunningham approved all trade tickets before trades were executed.

## The Account Opening Process and Misrepresentations and Omissions of Material Fact Made to Prospective Investors

- Although many potential clients declined to invest during the initial cold call from CTI's openers, some potential clients were contacted repeatedly and insistently until they agreed to open an account with and invest through CTI.
- To incite impulse buying, CTI sent account opening documents, and required prospective investors to transmit the completed documents, via facsimile. Moore, Cunningham, Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones placed great pressure on the registered representatives to insure that anyone who had received account opening documents proceeded to trade immediately. Registered representatives repeatedly and insistently telephoned each 28 prospective client who had received account opening documents until

the prospective client returned a signed form. After a signed form was returned, an initial trade was placed for the client.

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- 25. Registered representatives hurried potential clients into opening accounts, sometimes telling them they had to "act now" or lose a "great opportunity." They did not disclose to the prospective investors that the "great opportunity" being touted was simply Moore's daily recommendation.
- 26. In a further effort to incite potential investors to begin trading as soon as possible, CTI either directed its new clients to wire funds through their banks or sent Federal Express couriers to collect checks from clients.
- 27. When soliciting potential clients, CTI's registered representatives exaggerated the likelihood of potential profits to clients, often telling them that they could double and triple their money within a month or less, or even within a few days. CTI's 15 registered representatives often focused on one specific options transaction and emphasized the short term nature of that particular They also made baseless price predictions for each. investment. transaction. For example, the registered representatives would predict that if the Japanese yen made a "three cent move" the prospective client could earn \$15,000 to \$18,000 by investing \$7500 CTI's registered representatives did not disclose to potential 23 investors that the foreign currency options market is highly speculative and the likelihood of realizing the described profits was remote.
- The vast majority of CTI's clients lost much or all 27 of their investments. In fact, of 897 known CTI client accounts, 28 830 accounts, or 92.5%, lost money on trades before commission

payments were calculated. CTI's registered representatives did not disclose to potential or existing clients that most of its clients lost all or most of their investments.

- 29. Moreover, CTI normally charged an eight percent commission for the purchase of an option position, and another eight percent commission for its sale. Through the 897 known accounts, CTI charged a total of \$16,471,095.58 in commissions, an average of over \$18,362 per client. After the commission payments are factored into the calculation, 881 of the 897 known accounts, or 98.2%, lost much or all of their investments. CTI's registered representatives did not disclose to any clients or potential clients that CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time.
- 30. CTI's registered representatives also did not disclose to potential investors that it was CTI's practice to refuse to allow clients to direct activity in their accounts and to refuse to return client funds, as set forth below.
- The statements and omissions made by CTI's registered representatives, at the direction of Moore, Cunningham, Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones, were false and misleading. As described above, 20 the false and misleading statements and omissions include, but are not limited to, the statements regarding exaggerated profits and Moore's daily recommendation as a "great opportunity," and omissions regarding the highly speculative nature of foreign options trading, the percentage of CTI's clients who had lost money and CTI's practices of refusing to allow clients to direct activity in their accounts and refusing to return client funds.

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# e. CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds. Misrepresentations and Omissions of Material Fact Made to Existing Clients

- 33. Once an investor had made an initial investment, a registered representative quickly urged the client to send additional funds. Some registered representatives orally misrepresented position values. Initial reports of profitable positions convinced some clients -- temporarily -- that foreign currency options trading was an easy way to make money.
- 34. When positions lost value, registered representatives repeatedly pressured clients to send funds for new trades that were represented to be sure ways to recover their losses and to earn large profits.
- 35. Clients who refused to send additional funds were pressured to continue trading by a series of different registered representatives. Some clients who refused to trade after losses

were contacted by a registered representative who described himself as a senior broker who was called upon to "fix" the account. The senior broker often derided the abilities of the previous registered representative even though all registered representatives used only Moore's daily trade recommendations and, consequently, a registered representative could not legitimately purport to recoup losses by virtue of abilities or information superior to that of another registered representative. Through high pressure pitches and baseless promises of profit, the "senior broker" induced many clients to continue trading. Attempting to recover losses, some clients embarked on frantic trading binges, for which CTI continued to charge its high commissions.

- 36. Moore and Cunningham did not allow the registered representatives to spend time updating clients who did not send new funds. Registered representatives were required by Moore and Cunningham to focus on opening new accounts and getting new funds from existing clients.
- 37. Among the registered representatives, Weber was particularly known for his wild, high pressure pitches. Weber often contacted existing clients, including clients whom other registered representatives could not convince to trade, and obtained substantial sums from some of them. Weber falsely promised huge gains within three to five days and promised to cover client positions personally if trades lost money. Weber also misrepresented the value of open positions to incite clients to make additional trades.

### Refusal to Permit Clients to Direct Activity in Their Accounts and Refusal to Return Client Funds

38. Cunningham and Moore required the registered representatives to obtain one of their approvals before any trades were placed. Cunningham and Moore usually prohibited sales without corresponding buys. Moore also required the registered representatives to refuse or disregard client instructions with respect to activity in client accounts if it did not comport with his daily recommendation.

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- 39. CTI did not comply with client instructions to sell open positions. When clients directed registered representatives to sell their positions, the registered representatives refused or disregarded them, even though options become worthless if they are not sold before their expiration date. Some options expired worthless after client directions to sell them were refused or disregarded.
- 40. Client instructions to return their funds also were refused or disregarded. Clients known to be calling for their money were hung up on, switched back and forth between branch offices, or put on hold until they hung up the telephone. Registered representatives believed they would be fired if they agreed to return client funds. It was CTI's usual practice not to return any funds to clients unless legal action appeared imminent or a client had been financially depleted.
- 41. Moore, Cunningham, Wiginton, Kelsall and Jones 26 directed registered representatives to implement CTI's policies of refusing and disregarding client instructions with respect to 28 account activity and refusing and disregarding client instructions

to return funds. When soliciting clients directly, Cunningham, Wiginton, Kelsall, Weber and Jones implemented the same policies. CTI's policies of refusing and disregarding client instructions with respect to account activity and refusing and disregarding client instructions to return funds were never disclosed to potential investors or existing investors.

# Direct Misrepresentations and Omissions of Material Facts by Cunningham

- 42. Cunningham directly made material misrepresentations and omissions to potential and existing investors in CTI.

  Cunningham's misrepresentations and omissions include, but are not limited to:
  - a. telling clients they would double or triple their money within extremely short time frames (from less than a week to 30 days);
  - b. failing to inform clients and potential clients that foreign currency options are highly speculative and the likelihood of the described potential profits was remote;
  - c. failing to inform clients and potential clients that nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and that CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time; and
  - d. failing to inform clients and potential clients that CTI's policy was to refuse to allow clients to direct the activity in their accounts and that CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds.
- 43. Cunningham made these misrepresentations and omissions while knowing, or while reckless in not knowing, that:

- a. foreign currency options are speculative securities and the likelihood of the described potential profits was remote;
- b. nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time;
- c. CTI's practice was to refuse to allow clients to direct the activity in their accounts; and
  - d. CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds.

Direct Misrepresentations and Omissions of Material Facts

# by Wiginton

- 44. Wiginton directly made material misrepresentations and omissions to potential and existing investors in CTI.

  Wiginton's direct misrepresentations and omissions include, but are not limited to:
  - a. telling clients he would definitely recoup their investment losses if they sent him more money;
  - b. telling clients he would double or triple their money;
  - c. telling clients who lost money that he was a "senior broker" who could "fix" their account losses, and deriding the purported abilities of the clients' previous registered representatives;
  - d. failing to inform clients and potential clients that foreign currency options are highly speculative and the likelihood of the described potential profits was remote;
  - e. failing to inform clients and potential clients that nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and that CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time; and

- f. failing to inform clients and potential clients that CTI's policy was to refuse to allow clients to direct the activity in their accounts and that CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds.
- 45. Wiginton made these misrepresentations and omissions while knowing, or while reckless in not knowing, that:
  - a. foreign currency options are speculative securities and the likelihood of the described potential profits was remote;
  - b. nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time;
  - c. CTI's practice was to refuse to allow clients to direct the activity in their accounts;
  - d. CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds; and
  - e. all registered representatives imparted only Moore's daily trading recommendations.

# Direct Misrepresentations and Omissions of Material Facts by Kelsall

- 46. Kelsall directly made material misrepresentations and omissions to potential and existing investors in CTI. Kelsall's direct misrepresentations and omissions include, but are not limited to:
  - a. telling a client he would earn \$6250 each time the yen moved one cent and that these profits would clear in three or four days;

2 foreign currency options are highly speculative and the 3 likelihood of the described potential profits was remote; failing to inform clients and potential clients that 4 5 nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and that CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time; and 6 7 failing to inform clients and potential clients that CTI's policy was to refuse to allow clients to direct the 8 9 activity in their accounts and that CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds. 10 11 47. Kelsall made these misrepresentations and omissions 12 while knowing, or while reckless in not knowing, that: foreign currency options are speculative securities. 13 and the likelihood of the described potential profits was 14 15 remote; nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and CTI's 16 commissions consumed virtually all gains over time; 17 CTI's practice was to refuse to allow clients to 18 direct the activity in their accounts; and 19 CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds. 20 Direct Misrepresentations and Omissions of Material Facts 21 by Weber 22 48. Weber directly made material misrepresentations and 23 omissions to potential and existing investors in CTI. Weber's 24 direct misrepresentations and omissions include, but are not limited 26 to:

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a.

failing to inform clients and potential clients that

promising huge gains within three to five days;

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- b. promising to cover client positions personally if trades lost money;
  - c. promising to double client funds within a week;
  - d. misrepresenting the value of open positions;
- e. failing to inform clients and potential clients that foreign currency options are highly speculative and the likelihood of the described potential profits was remote;
- f. failing to inform clients and potential clients that nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and that CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time; and
- g. failing to inform clients and potential clients that CTI's policy was to refuse to allow clients to direct the activity in their accounts and that CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds.
- 49. Weber made these misrepresentations and omissions while knowing, or while reckless in not knowing, that:
  - a. he did not intend to, and never did, cover client positions when trades lost money;
    - b. open positions values were being misrepresented;
  - c. foreign currency options are speculative securities and the likelihood of the described potential profits was remote;
  - d. nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time;
  - e. CTI's practice was to refuse to allow clients to direct the activity in their accounts; and
    - f. CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds.

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50. Jones directly made material misrepresentations and omissions to potential and existing investors in CTI. Jones' direct misrepresentations and omissions include, but are not limited to:

- a. promising to triple client investments within one week;
- b. assuring clients who had incurred losses that sending more money would make up their losses;
- c. failing to inform clients and potential clients that foreign currency options are highly speculative and the likelihood of the described potential profits was remote;
- d. failing to inform clients and potential clients that nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and that CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time; and
- e. failing to inform clients and potential clients that CTI's policy was to refuse to allow clients to direct the activity in their accounts and that CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds.
- 51. Jones made these misrepresentations and omissions while knowing, or while reckless in not knowing, that:
  - a. foreign currency options are speculative securities and the likelihood of the described potential profits was remote;
  - b. nearly all of CTI's clients lost money and CTI's commissions consumed virtually all gains over time;
  - c. CTI's practice was to refuse to allow clients to direct the activity in their accounts; and

d. CTI's practice was to refuse to return client funds.

#### FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

#### FRAUD IN THE OFFER OR SALE OF SECURITIES

# Section 17(a) of the Securities Act (Against All Defendants)

- 52. Paragraphs 1 through 51 are realleged and fully incorporated herein by this reference.
- 53. Defendants, by engaging in the conduct described above, directly or indirectly, in the offer or sale of securities, by the use of means or instruments of transportation or communication in interstate commerce or by use of the mails:
  - (a) with scienter, employed devices, schemes or artifices to defraud;
  - (b) obtained money or property by means of untrue statements of material fact or by omitting to state material facts necessary in order to make the statements made, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading; or
  - (c) engaged in transactions, practices or courses of business which operated or would operate as a fraud or deceit upon the purchasers of such securities.
- 54. By reason of the facts and circumstances described above, Defendants violated, and unless restrained and enjoined will continue to violate, Section 17(a) of the Securities Act [15 U.S.C. § 77q(a)].

#### SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF

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#### FRAUD IN CONNECTION WITH THE PURCHASE OR SALE OF SECURITIES

Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act

#### and Rule 10b-5 Thereunder

#### (Against All Defendants)

- Paragraphs 1 through 51 are realleged and fully incorporated herein by this reference.
- Defendants, by engaging in the conduct described above, directly or indirectly, in connection with the purchase or sale of securities, by the use of the means or instrumentalities of interstate commerce, or of the mails, or of a facility of a national securities exchange, with scienter:
  - (a) employed devices, schemes or artifices to defraud;
  - made untrue statements of material fact or omitted to (b) state material facts necessary in order to make the statements made, in light of the circumstances under which they were made, not misleading; or
  - (c) engaged in acts, practices or courses of business which operated or would operate as a fraud or deceit upon other persons.
- By reason of the facts and circumstances described above, Defendants violated, and unless restrained and enjoined will continue to violate, Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. § 78j(b)] and Rule 10b-5 thereunder [17 C.F.R. § 240.10b-5].
- 58. Moore possessed, directly or indirectly, the power to direct or control, or cause the direction or control of CTI's management and policies. Moore was therefore a controlling person 28 of CTI pursuant to Section 20(a) of the Exchange Act.

59. In the alternative to Moore's liability for his direct violations of Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act and Rule 10b-5 thereunder, Moore, by engaging in the conduct described above, is liable as a controlling person pursuant to Section 20(a) of the Exchange Act [15 U.S.C. §78t(a)] for CTI's violations of Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act and Rule 10b-5 thereunder.

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### PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, the Commission respectfully requests that the

I.

Issue orders permanently enjoining Defendants and their officers, agents, servants, employees, and attorneys, and those persons in active concert or participation with any of them, who receive actual notice of the order by personal service or otherwise, from violating Section 17(a) of the Securities Act, Section 10(b) of the Exchange Act and Rule 10b-5 thereunder.

II.

Order Defendants to disgorge all benefits gained as a result of their illegal conduct, plus prejudgment interest.

Impose a civil penalty against Defendants.

IV.

Retain jurisdiction of this action in accordance with the principles of equity and the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure in order to implement and carry out the terms of all orders and decrees that may be entered, or to entertain any suitable application or 28 motion for additional relief within the jurisdiction of this Court.

V. Grant such other and further relief as this Court may determine to be just and necessary. January <u>6</u>, 2000 DATED: David J. Van Havermaat Attorney for Plaintiff Securities and Exchange Commission 

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