

Cigarette Pack Color Serves In War


"*Lucky Strike Green Has Gone To War.*"



Lincoln, Me. (DG)---

In 1942, smokers of *Lucky Strike Cigarettes* noticed a drastic change to the *Lucky Strike* packs. Instead of the usual dark green and gold, the packs were white with red trim. On the bottom of the new packs was a curious abbreviation, "L.S./M.F.T." The reason for the change was heard on the radio commercials for *Lucky Strike*.

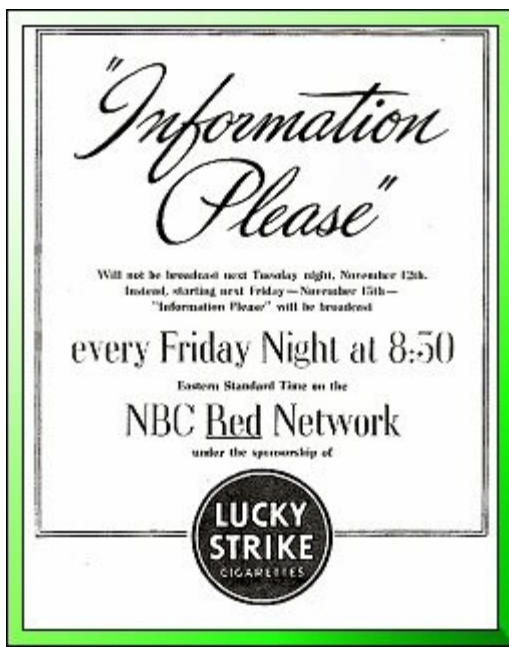
Like with many other products during World War II, the *Lucky Strike* radio commercials had a patriotic theme. The radio listeners heard the announcer say, "*Lucky Strike Green Has Gone To War.*" What he meant, the green dye used for the packaging of the *Lucky Strike* packs would be used for the war effort. The phrase was heard frequently on all programs *Lucky Strike* sponsored at that time. Unfortunately, it also stirred up a hornet's nest with one program.

When *Lucky Strike* sponsored *INFORMATION PLEASE* (1940-1943), it was a marriage that was made in a lower place than Heaven . From the very beginning, it was a battle between 2 strong willed men, George Washington Hill, the big cheese of the *American Tobacco Company*, and Dan Golenpaul, the creator of



INFORMATION PLEASE. While this relationship was stormy, it took the infamous *Lucky Strike Green Has Gone To War* phrase to really stir up trouble.

During a typical broadcast of *INFORMATION PLEASE*, the phrase was uttered or whispered at every opportunity it could be said--- even during the program! When there was a brief pause in the conversation between M.C. Clifton Fadiman and the program's panelists, the phrase was presented. Not only did this prove to be a distraction with the radio listeners, it also made Golenpaul furious. With the concern of ruining the program, Golenpaul asked Hill to drop the constant presentation of the phrase. Hill refused. The bitter sponsor/program relationship would eventually go to court. It was a well-publicized event. Public opinion had Golenpaul as



the good guy and Hill as the villain. The case was dismissed, but the stormy program/sponsor relationship came to a merciful end. Golenpaul was finally rid of Hill, **Lucky Strike**, and the annoying phrase.

Lucky Strike Green Has Gone To War not only rubbed Golenpaul the wrong way, it also grated the nerves of the people who mattered the most--- the radio listeners. In a 1943 poll conducted in **Woman's Day** magazine, **Lucky Strike Green Has Gone To War** was voted one of the most disliked radio commercials by the listeners who participated.

After Hill thought it served its purpose, **Lucky Strike Green Has Gone To War** passed into radio advertising oblivion--- much to the relief of the listeners. With **L.S./M.F.T.** becoming the catch phrase, the **Lucky Strike** commercials continued the tradition as a source of unpopularity with the listeners. (For the record, **L.S./M.F.T.** was also voted unpopular in the **Woman's Day** poll).

On paper, **Lucky Strike Green Has Gone To War** appeared to be a patriotic gesture to help the Allies. The truth to the matter was that Hill intended to change and modernize the **Lucky Strike** packs anyway. It just so happened World War II was in progress--- and the "sacrifice" of the green dye made the **American Tobacco Company** look good with the public.

