ES& to the NEWS

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OBSCENITY AND THE MAILS

Now that the publisher of Hustler Magazine has been convicted of criminal obscenity in a state court, the next question that should be asked is, **why** has the Federal Government allowed this obscene magazine to enjoy Second Class mail privileges?

By a visit to your local newsstand, you can verify for yourself that there are at least a dozen outrageously obscene magazines to which the U.S. Post Office has granted the benefit of a special permit to mail at the very low Second Class rate. Another dozen obscene magazines have their application for a Second Class permit now pending, such as Screw Magazine. **WAi@@ .r&s 8•@9 h@•& tg be obsceae h¥ ..a- a Late** coo! t'.:.

Take along a magnifying glass when you go on your newsstand inspection tour, because the notice of these Second Class permits is hidden in print almost too small to read.

A Second Class mail permit is one of the most valuable economic assets a publication can own. Second Class mail rates are only a fraction of the price of First or Third Class mail rates.

Depending on the magazine's circulation, a Second Class permit can be worth thousands of dollars a month because of the savings in postage costs. The privilege to mail al"second Class rates is often the difference between whether a magazine operates at a financial profit or at a loss.

The postage costs saved by the holders of Second Class mail permits are paid by the American taxpayers. The purpose of this subsidy is to promote education, public information, and news.

According to Federal law, Second Class mail permits are limited to periodicals

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that are "published for the dissemination of information of a public character, or devoted to literature, the sciences, arts, or a special industry." Obscene magazines simply do not meet either the letter or the spirit of these standards.

Prior to 1955, obscene magazines never held Second Class mail permits. In that year, an influential Washington lawyer named Abe Fortas succeeded in getting a Second Class permit for his client, an indecent magazine named Rogue.

According to testimony before the Senate Judiciary Connnittee, an FBI agent named Homer Young was told by William Hamling, publisher of Rogue, that he had hired Abe Fortas as a lawyer because Fortas "could fix anything no matter what administration was in power." This disclosure was one of the events that preceded Fortas' resignation from the U.S. Supreme Court.

Once Fortas succeeded in getting a Second Class permit for Rogue, one obscene magazine after another claimed its equal right to have its pornography subsidized by the American taxpayers.

Dreary and depressing statistics are available that show the tremendous increase in sex crimes, including rape, prostitution, and child abuse during the last decade. Areas where so-called adult bookstores and porno movie houses are concentrated, such as the Boston Combat Zone, have been the scene of vicious murders.

It is bad enough for obscene magazines to be allowed to pollute the moral climate of our cities. It is intolerable that the American taxpayers are forced to subsidize obscenity traffic through Second Class mail permits.

It is time that we have a Congressional and a media investigation of how many obscene magazines now have this valuable permit, and why these permits were not revoked by the Post Office when the obscene nature of the publications became obvious. The investigation should also inquire why obscene magazines are openly sold in Washington, D.C., and never prosecuted by the Federal Government.

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