



Association for Postal Commerce

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May 21, 2003

Mr. Dennis Shea
Executive Director
President's Commission on the Postal Service
1120 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 971
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Dennis:

While I promised not to bug you with trivial pursuits, there is one matter that warrants some comment. I've been following the reports on some of the ex parte meetings between Commissioners and various parties, and couldn't help noticing that our "friends" from the Newspaper Association of America have been busy peddling baloney to any Commissioner who's been willing to listen. The baloney I refer to is the claptrap NAA has been propounding for years that advertising mail rates (Standard Mail) are subsidized by First-Class Mail rates. While I'm sure that you have dutifully informed the Commissioners that the truth is otherwise, I still feel it's necessary to set the record straight.

As you know, the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 strictly prohibits *any* cross-subsidy from one class of mail to another. In order for NAA's contentions to be true, that would mean that someone would have to declare that the Postal Rate Commission, the Governors of the Postal Service, and every federal appeals court who has even heard a postal rate dispute have egregiously violated federal law, and deserve to be hauled off to jail. Obviously, no one has ever done so, and no one in authority ever will. The reason is simple: *THERE IS NO SUBSIDY OF STANDARD MAIL RATES BY FIRST-CLASS MAIL.*

One other matter, those of us who use or support others in the use of mail for business communication and commerce believe the word "junk," when used in conjunction with the noun "mail," is a four-letter word that warrants a mouth-washing with soap. The epithet "junk," when used to refer to advertising mail, has been propounded by newspaper industry representatives as a means of denigrating and devaluing the idea of distributing printed advertising through the mail, as opposed to being carried by newspapers.

The stuff NAA likes to call "junk" *is*, in actuality, *ADVERTISING*-- the very same kind of advertising that one characteristically sees in newspapers and magazines, listens to on radio, or sees on broadcast and cable television. The advertising that appears in the mail serves the same function as advertising in any other medium. It's designed to stimulate commerce and economic growth. If one is to conclude that advertising in the mail is "junk" (i.e., valueless), then one must be prepared to conclude that advertising in *any* medium and in *any* form is without value.

Thank you for your forbearance. I'm sure this is sufficient to set matters straight.

Sincerely,

Gene A. Del Polito
President