

to the American millions. Hence, most people, if they cannot think how to do it themselves, are at a loss to think of how anyone can. Thus, they mistakenly conclude that it is a task not for free men but for government.

Of course, no human being can hit upon how to do this. The head of A T & T, had he lived a century ago and been asked to tell how to deliver the human voice all over the world at the speed of light, would have been stumped. Indeed, he doesn't know how to do it in 1967 after the miracle is a *fait accompli*. He no more knows how to deliver the human voice than the head of General Motors knows how to make an automobile, or the head of Boeing knows how to make a jet, or the head of Eberhard Faber knows how to make a pencil!³

The Uses of Knowledge

To rid ourselves of "the problem," we must understand the sum and substance of the knowledge that accounts for voice delivery, automobiles, jets, pencils, the only aggregation of knowledge that can deliver mail with increasing efficiency and decreasing costs.

This knowledge is not the frag-

ment that exists or can be assimilated in any single mind. It is, instead, a coming together of literally trillions of tiny bits of know-how, infinitesimal wisdoms, ideas, creativities, inventions, discoveries, think-of-thats, flowing in complex interchange since the dawn of human consciousness.⁴ These discrete bits naturally form to accomplish this or that — mail delivery or whatever — provided they are free to flow. This phenomenon is comparable to and just as miraculous as the invisible molecules that show forth as a cloud, a tree, a vein of gold.

Small wonder that no person knows how to deliver mail to millions of people, or ever will! Anyone who attempts to mastermind the activity is doomed to failure.

Some ask, why not turn mail delivery over to the successful A T & T? This company knows about voice delivery, not mail delivery and is no more prepared to take over the postal business than is General Electric or Piggly Wiggly.

The knowledge required for successful mail delivery is not only unknown but utterly unpredictable. No one understood the fundamentals of voice delivery a cen-

tury ago! We only know that the successful delivery of mail requires a wholly new arrangement and assembly of knowledge — existing knowledge extending back to harnessing fire and the invention of zero, plus many undreamed of cost-saving, service-bettering inventions, creativities, discoveries.

This new assembly of knowledge will emerge when free entry is permitted in the mail business, that is, when it is on a private property, competitive, profit and loss, willing exchange basis. And what shape or form or size the business will take cannot even be guessed.

If the Answer Were Known, a Committee Might Find It

A century ago the human voice could be delivered no farther than two shouters could effectively communicate — less than 50 yards! But bear in mind that today's fantastic attainment was not brought about by some nineteenth century commission formulating an A T & T to solve a problem that no one knew existed.

Successful voice delivery is the flower of the freest market ever experienced by man. Freedom is responsible for the attainment, and also explains why A T & T exists. This corporation, as well as the 2,500 independents, are

merely formal and legal assemblies of existing expertise, knowledge, persons. These structures are not the cause of the creativities; it is the creativities, stimulated when men are free to try, that account for the structures.

We should appreciate, in light of all the evidence, that the postal problem — and it is a real one — cannot be resolved by simply restructuring the business. One doesn't start there.

The sole answer lies in freeing the market. For the best service and the lowest rates, let anyone deliver mail at whatever price he can obtain! At the moment, this seems to be out of the question because there is so little faith in private property, willing exchange procedures. What is required, then, is a deeper and broader grasp of these phenomenal, miraculous processes.

If we wish efficient mail delivery, we must first recognize the root of the trouble: a lack of faith in what men can accomplish when free. The revival of this faith rests on an improved understanding of the phenomena which flow from the practice of liberty. It begins with your and my enlightenment. If we are successful enough, others also will behold the light. There isn't any answer, at this time, short of free market education. ♦

³ See the chapter, "Only God can Make A Tree—Or A Pencil" in my *Anything That's Peaceful* (Irvington, N.Y.: The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc., 1964) pp. 136-43.

⁴ See the chapter, "The Miraculous Market" in *The Free Market and Its Enemy* (Irvington, N. Y.: The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc., 1965) pp. 6-21.