

Oscar B. Johannsen in the October HGN suggests that "to depend on free enterprise and the free market" would be "a better solution" than if the post office were to become a private government corporation. Contrary to what has been published, postal unions would favor a private government corporation if there was a labor-management law which included union recognition, binding arbitration and/or the right to strike. Without these guarantees, postal workers would be left to the mercy of political wolves.

Though we have valid reasons in not wanting to become part of private enterprise, Henry George has made some very appropriate observations on this matter in *Social Problems*:

(1) "I do not think the postal department of the government, with its extensive ramifications and its numerous employees, begins to be as important a factor in our politics, or, exerts so corrupting an influence, as would a private corporation carrying on this business, and which would be constantly tempted or forced into politics to procure favorable or prevent unfavorable legislation."

(2) "The post office department is managed with greater efficiency than any other department of the National Government, because it comes close to the people. To say the very least, it is managed as efficiently as any private company could manage such a business, and I think, on the whole, as economically."

In this age of oligopolies, I am wondering how Mr. Johannsen could suggest that the post office department be run "under the principles of free enterprise?" If it was impractical in George's time when free enterprise was the thing, how can the post office be run in this manner when free enterprise is practically non-existing?

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I want to dispute Mr. Johannsen's article on transferring the post office to private industry. This is nothing more than a give-away program. I acknowledge that there could be some improvement in the service, but if the postal service were turned over to private industry the service would be no better. We would be paying more for postage rates and would only enrich the few at the expense of the public. Under government supervision when there are grievances submitted by the rank and file of the postal employees, they appeal to Congress for the betterment of their conditions, as strikes are forbidden. Would those who advocate turning this institution into private hands also approve of the employees' right to strike if there are grievances as they have in private companies?

I cannot understand why those who profess to be Georgists decry monopoly of land by speculators yet approve of turning the post office, which belongs to the public, into private industry, thereby creating another monopoly. As a matter of fact Henry George advocated public control of such monopolies as railroads, telegraph, etc.

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Many points of issue arise in your letter columns (Nov. HGN). J. J. Pot's equation of "non-wealth money" with obligation is correct but he should not have extended the argument to introduce the government as a policer of obligation. The market place is the only adequate guardian of integrity and history records the failure of government coercion to sustain a viable morality.

Government coercion *can* sustain monopoly and one may extend this argument to say that monopoly cannot exist without government coercion. The privileges listed by Josephine Hansen are stepchildren of this heavy father (Aug. HGN).