The plight of the USPS (cont)

In general, one can not make cuts without reducing some services, affecting some employees, impacting some who depend on the program targeted — but again, one can not reduce spending and get the budget under control, if people can not tolerate any changes in anything.

We don't want to pay more for postage, see services reduced and see people lose their jobs — and in the end stop producing the material that fuels the hobby — but then again we can not afford to continue to see government take no real action to live within its means.

The Postal Service — *The modern mail, or post, is a system for transporting letters and other tangible objects: written documents, typically enclosed in envelopes, and also small packages are delivered to destinations around the world. Anything sent through the postal system is called mail or post.*

A postal service can be private or public, though many governments place restrictions on private systems. Since the 1840's national postal systems have generally been established as government monopolies with a fee on the article prepaid. Proof of payment is often in the form of adhesive postage stamps, but postage meters are also used for bulk mailing.

Now, in most other countries, Postal authorities often have functions other than transporting letters and manage the nations . communications in the form of , a Postal Telegraph and Telephone (PTT) service which oversees the postal system as well as having authority over telephone and telegraph systems. Some countries' postal systems allow for savings accounts and handle applications for passports.

This service and practice of communication by written documents carried by an intermediary from one person or place to another dates back nearly to the invention of writing. However, development of formal postal systems occurred much later. The first documented use of an organized courier service for the diffusion of written documents is in Egypt, where Pharaohs used couriers for the diffusion of their decrees in the territory of the State (2400 BCE).

The first real claim for the development of a postal system comes from Persia and is documented by the Greek, Xenophon, who attributes the invention to the Persian King Cyrus the Great (550 BCE). Other sources claim much earlier dates for an Assyrian postal system, with credit given to Hammurabi (1700 BCE) and Summaria's Sargon II (722 BCE). Mail may not have been the primary mission of this postal service, however the original role of the system may have been as an intelligence gathering apparatus is well documented, and the service was (later) called angariae, a term that in time came to indicate a tax system. The Old Testament (Book of Esther) makes mention of this system: Ahasuerus, king of Medes, used couriers for communicating his decisions.

Cyrus

In India, with the rapid economic growth and political stability under the Mauryan empire (322–185 BCE) which saw the development of the first civil infrastructure in ancient India. The Mauryans developed early Indian mail service as well as public wells, rest houses, schools, and other facilities for the common public and promotion of commerce.

China established a postal relay stations since the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) with the first large postal system in the world was established by Ugedei Khan, who was successor of Genghis Khan of Mongolian empire in thirteen century, which territory then included China as will as territory spanning most of Asia and a good chunk of Eastern Europe.

In China alone, this system was not only used for the transmission and delivery of official mail but were also available for traveling officials, military men, and foreign dignitaries. These stations aided and facilitated the transport of foreign and domestic tribute specifically and the conduct of trade in general. By the end of Khan's rule there were more than 1400 postal stations in China which in turn had at their disposal about 50,000 horses, 1400 oxen, 6700 mules, 400 carts, 6000 boats, over 200 dogs, and 1150 sheep.

Mongol Empire

The Roman Empire was the first well-documented postal service. It was organized at the time of Augustus Caesar (62 BCE–14 CE) and is considered to be the first true mail service. The service was called cursus publicus (express mail) and was provided with light carriages called rhedæ pulled by fast horses. Additionally, there was another, slower, service equipped with two-wheeled carts (birolæ) pulled by oxen.

(to be continued)