

Foundation for Economic
Education
- Report on freedom
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REPORT ON FREEDOM

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THE FOUNDATION FOR
ECONOMIC EDUCATION, INC.

IRVINGTON-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK

Purpose of the Report

Anyone who has invested, or is contemplating investing, his time or money in support of an institution is entitled to a factual report on what that institution *is* and *does*. Hence this publication: to provide, in the shortest possible space, a reasonably complete picture — especially for present and prospective donors — of the Foundation for Economic Education.

REPORT ON FREEDOM

EVERYBODY says he's in favor of freedom. Even the leaders of communist Russia claim to be the only real defenders of *true* human freedom. Peace and freedom are their favorite words, just as the same words are used constantly by our own leaders. Yet, freedom of choice in the daily lives of the people is strait-jacketed in both the United States and Russia, and "peace" describes a period of

armed truce between major wars.

Why? Apparently it's because we don't know what freedom is. We don't understand the fact that small-scale compulsions within nations tend to grow into large-scale violence among nations. The person who desires to impose his will and viewpoint upon his neighbors in small ways "for their own good" is well on his way toward imposing his ideas upon



Foundation headquarters at Irvington-on-Hudson, about 20 miles north of New York City.

all people in large ways, "for the good of mankind."

This is not a new problem. Many civilizations in the past have perished because they did not understand the proper relationships of man to his fellow men and were thus unable to stop conflicts between persons and nations.

Search for Solution

Throughout history, persons in groups or alone have devoted their efforts to the search for a solution to this problem of the proper relationships among persons — and the part that should be played by the authority and force of government. Yet, few of the answers are generally known. If they were, conflict between persons and groups would soon become a minor problem.

There have been, and still are, many persons and groups in the United States devoting their full efforts to a study of this problem of freedom — the problem of the individual in society. Some specialize in one area of it, such as freedom of speech or freedom of the press or some other fraction of freedom.

Economic Education

In March of 1946, another such group was formed. It was called the Foundation for Economic Education because its founders then believed that the problem was simply a lack of understanding and appreciation of the infinite possibilities for peace and prosperity to be found in voluntary exchange in the market place. That's why the solution was thought to be in economic education. But to many persons, the word *economic* is too narrowly concerned with material considerations to cover the gamut of human actions and reactions involved in the study of freedom.

The founder and president of the Foundation for Economic Education, Leonard E. Read, now believes that a more accurate and descriptive name for this organization would be the Foundation for the Study of Freedom. The purpose of the Foundation — the study of freedom — involves every contact of man with his fellow men. It demands inquiry into the nature and function of government and religion, and other factors which influence not only the economic behavior but also the whole life of man. Freedom is

indivisible, and any effort to fragmentize it may be misleading, if not disastrous.

A key idea in the concept of this Foundation is that the "mass education and mass opinion," about which there is so much concern, must follow the understanding which grows out of deeper study in the form of clear and simplified explanations. This basic research and a resulting literature are precisely what have been lacking. In one sense, it is something like the automobile; its mass ownership and use was attained only after the careful work of inventors and engineers and manufacturers made it possible. Almost anyone can now own and operate a car—about which he knows very little—except how to enjoy its use.

An All-Important Problem

We of the Foundation staff do not in any sense claim that our studies and writings have revealed all the answers. We are well aware that in our lifetimes we can at best only scratch the surface of this perplexing and all-important subject. We propose only to continue an uncompromising search for truth and to

make the results available in printed form to whoever wants them.

Since we are persuaded by study and research that right and wrong cannot be determined by a show of hands, we do not and will not advocate basing such decisions upon the vote of the majority.

Since government ownership of the means of production is wrong in our judgment, we do not and will not advocate some "proper percentage" of government ownership.

Since we believe that a man's religious faith, or the earning of his livelihood, or the management of his business, is his own personal responsibility, we do not and will not try to be "practical" or "politically expedient" by urging some measure of governmental aid or intervention in these matters.

Consistent Means

We will always attempt to suggest means which are consistent with, rather than in contradiction to, those objectives which seem to us proper. We deal only in principles which, if correct, are eternal and timeless and inde-

pendent of the particular stage of advancement of any given society. We leave compromise for those who believe that there may be a long-term advantage in a temporary deviation from what one believes to be right.

Many sincere friends of the Foundation have suggested that FEE's work would be more effective if it accepted and worked with political action as it exists in practice. They have suggested, for example, that FEE should endorse the "moderate" or "limited number" approach to the issue of government housing rather than to continue FEE's "extreme and politically inexpedient" position of no government housing at all.

Under no circumstances will the Foundation for Economic Education ever knowingly adopt or endorse such a philosophy of "compromise." Does anyone suggest, for example, that German moralists should have concentrated their efforts on the "politically attainable goal" of influencing Hitler to use a more "humane and Christian method of exterminating Jews" rather than concentrating their efforts on "the politically inexpedient"

idea that Jews should not be exterminated at all?

Grounds for Repudiation

If FEE ever compromises in this area of principle—whether it concerns housing, wheat, electricity, or human life—its present and future potentialities for good will be ended. If the Foundation ever begins to operate on the level of political expediency, it should be—and doubtless will be—repudiated by all.

The Foundation for Economic Education makes no pretense of "presenting both sides" of the socialist question. We of the staff are opposed to socialism—call it governmental intervention, fascism, communism, the Welfare State, common ownership for the good of all the people, or whatever. Since we are convinced that socialism is evil, we ourselves would necessarily become evil by our own standards if we repeated the fallacies and clichés offered by the socialists in defense of their position.

We're Only Human

We would no more think of deliberately sponsoring socialist thought than would a minister

think of sharing his pulpit with the devil in order that "the people may have the advantage of hearing both sides of the issue." There is no moral obligation—and there should be no legal obligation—upon any person to advance, present, or sponsor ideas which he considers false or evil. This, of course, doesn't mean that the FEE staff is always right and hasn't made mistakes. Since we're only human, we've naturally made our full share of mistakes in both policy and ideas! But when our readers point them out

—as they frequently do—we admit them and continue our search for more understanding and better explanations.

The Staff

The Foundation staff is headed by Leonard E. Read, former executive in Chamber of Commerce work and executive vice-president of the National Industrial Conference Board. Among those assisting him are Doctors F. A. Harper and W. M. Curtiss, former professors of marketing at Cornell University; Dr. Ludwig



The Library and Board Room at Irvington headquarters.

von Mises, famed Austrian economist whose time is divided between the Foundation and his professorship at New York University; Dr. Paul L. Poirot, former business economist; Thomas J. Shelly, veteran teacher of history and economics in high school; Miss Bettina Bien, with experience in foreign trade and editorial work; Charles Hull Wolfe, former creative executive with a leading advertising agency; Rev. Edmund A. Opitz, an ordained minister who has studied widely in economic and political science; and Mrs. Elizabeth Glenn Eastburn, former manager of American Chamber of Commerce Executives.

Economist, Dr. Murray Rothbard, and journalists, John Chamberlain and Dean Russell, are among the other part-time members of FEE's senior staff.

The Foundation is further staffed by persons skilled in the handling of publications, mailings, library research, records and accounts, secretarial work, and

other tasks vital to its operation. There are 50 full-time employees.

Needless to say, the Foundation staff has grown, and there have been changes in personnel since 1946. Such change is not unusual, particularly within a group searching more for freedom and its opportunities than for security and its betrayals. To help individuals discover their potentialities and then to release them to new and greater opportunities in industry, journalism, teaching, and other occupations is considered an important function of the Foundation.

The Trustees

The Trustees are drawn from all sections of the nation. They are mostly leaders in industrial and academic work, with one or more representatives from publishing and communication fields.

While the Trustees advise on general policies of operation, they do not sit as an editorial board. The Officers and Trustees for the year 1956-57 are:

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Publications

The primary objective and leading activity of the Foundation is the compilation and publication of a literature on freedom—by current as well as classical writers.

During its early years of operation, FEE published well over 200 items on the problems and philosophy of freedom, ranging from single sheets to books. Single copies of each item were sent to any person who had asked to be on FEE's mailing list. A descriptive list of publications is available.

This literature of freedom carries an appeal to almost every age and interest. A sample of the scope and quality of FEE's work is presented in two volumes of *Essays on Liberty*—collections in book form of previously published shorter articles.

The Freeman

In addition to distributing pamphlets, booklets, and books, the Foundation also publishes a journal of libertarian opinion, *THE FREEMAN*. Each month this 64-page digest-size publication presents both timely and timeless ar-



A display of FEE publications in the reception room at Irvington.

ticles—by FEE staff members and outside contributors, as well as excerpts from classic expositors of freedom. THE FREEMAN is offered on a controlled circulation basis. Anyone who wants it may receive it, the expectation being that most readers also will want to help pay for it. The first \$5.00 of each annual contribution to FEE is regarded as payment for THE FREEMAN.

Contributions exceeding \$5.00 enable the Foundation to offer its publications on request and without charge to students, teachers, ministers, and others who may wish them.

Speakers

Besides its publication program, the Foundation carries on many other activities. For example, although FEE has no speakers' bureau, the various staff members do fill many speaking engagements and participate in seminars, conferences, and such. In any one year, there may be a hundred or more of these, involving extensive traveling all over the United States and into Canada and Mexico. These personal contacts serve to fulfill the demand and need for verbal presentation

of the ideas on freedom. They also introduce FEE and its staff to an ever-widening audience and to ideas, questions, and issues most in need of consideration.

Schools and Colleges

A Foundation project of high importance is its work with students in colleges and high schools. Much care and effort is devoted to their letters. THE FREEMAN and other Foundation publications are offered without charge to students. In the spring of 1956, about 4,000 requested and received these materials. Quite a thorough job is done in assembling information on the yearly debate questions for both high schools and colleges; and a packet of appropriate Foundation and other literature, as well as an extensive bibliography, is offered on request. Each year hundreds of requests are filled, and the number increases steadily. Inquiry about debate packets may be addressed to Miss Bettina Bien.

Study Guides

The Foundation offers several study guides and bibliographies for the literature on freedom—

published by FEE or otherwise. The main purpose of this project is to adapt several of the Foundation's releases to classroom use, although these study guides are also widely used by adult discussion groups. Some teachers—especially in high schools—have found these aids most helpful. In line with Foundation policy, this service is offered only on request by the teacher. For further information about study aids, write to Mr. Thomas J. Shelly.

Study Groups

From the beginning, the Foundation has encouraged students of freedom who wished to meet from time to time with like-minded persons for study and discussion. FEE's interest in such activity was somewhat formalized in 1956, when it launched a nationwide Constitution Study Program.

Under this program, the Foundation offers: a text on the Constitution (complete with a FEE-prepared study guide); packets of pertinent reference materials; a multilithed article giving suggestions for starting and conducting Constitution study groups; and help in locating other interested students.

Correspondence

Each Foundation staff member carries on a large and ever-growing personal correspondence. We feel strongly that much of FEE's most effective work is done through careful consideration and response to specific questions asked by interested individuals. This highly desirable form of imparting ideas has an added advantage: We learn at least as much as we teach.

College-Business Program

Another service offered by the Foundation is its College-Business Exchange Program. This is designed to encourage business firms to offer summer fellowships to college professors. The professors are enabled to spend six weeks observing and participating in the problems and policies of the business firm. While the business firms pay the professors' basic expenses, the fellowships are not intended to be "summer jobs." They are offered to qualified professors who are willing to make some sacrifice to increase their knowledge and their teaching ability. Each year fellowships are arranged for more than 100 professors from almost as many



J. M. Budd (left), President of Great Northern Railway Company, presenting certificate to Dr. Wallace I. Little upon completion of his 6-weeks College-Business Exchange Fellowship.

different colleges and universities. Some business firms offer several fellowships each year. This is a most popular and ever-expanding project. The Foundation *does not* award the fellowships. It only serves as co-ordinator between professors and businessmen who are interested in working together.

Summer Seminars

In 1956, the Foundation conducted three 2-week seminars—

in June, July, and August—at Foundation headquarters in Irvington-on-Hudson, New York. Following daily lectures by distinguished libertarians, participants took part in informal discussions with members of the Foundation staff. These seminars were open to college teachers and a few businessmen.

The success of the 1956 seminars warrants the expectation that these sessions will be continued in future years.

During the first year of this activity the professors came from the following colleges and universities:

ARIZONA

American Institute of
Foreign Trade
Arizona State College

CALIFORNIA

College of the Pacific
San Jose State College
Pasadena College
University of California

IDAHO

College of Idaho

ILLINOIS

Illinois Institute of Technology
University of Illinois
Aurora College

INDIANA

Purdue University
Indiana University

IOWA

Westmar College
State University of Iowa

KANSAS

McPherson College
Fort Hays Kansas State College

KENTUCKY

University of Kentucky

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston College

MICHIGAN

University of Michigan

MISSOURI

Park College

NEW YORK

Fordham University
St. Joseph's College for Women
Ladycliff College

NORTH CAROLINA

East Carolina College

OHIO

Xavier University
Ohio State University

PENNSYLVANIA

University of Pittsburgh

SOUTH CAROLINA

University of South Carolina

TEXAS

Prairie View A & M College
St. Mary's University
Incarnate Word College

WASHINGTON

Clark College
State College of Washington

WEST VIRGINIA

Concord College

WISCONSIN

Beloit College
Institute of Paper Chemistry

WYOMING

University of Wyoming

MEXICO

Institute for Research in
Sociology & Economics

PUERTO RICO

University of Puerto Rico

For further information about college-business fellowships or summer seminars write to Dr. W. M. Curtiss.

The Foundation for Economic Education tries to fill every request for the foregoing and other services, while at the same time it must finance its plant and expanding operations. As previously stated, anyone who indicates a sincere interest may, on request, be added to FEE's mailing list and receive each new release and the announcements of its various programs. Obviously, these things cost money. Where does it come from?

Finances

The method of obtaining financial support to carry on the work of the Foundation is unique. Individuals and organizations send annual donations on a strictly voluntary basis. These contributions are tax-exempt because of the educational nature of FEE's work. The Foundation uses no pressure tactics and has no solicitor on the road to collect funds. FEE is thus able to use nearly all of the donated money directly in the work for which it was intended — research and education in the problems and ideals of human liberty.

Though the Foundation has no reserve of endowed funds, they are invited nonetheless.

The Foundation's nearest approach to solicitation is an occasional reminder to those on the mailing list:

1. That \$5.00 a year covers the cost of a monthly copy of *THE FREEMAN*.
2. That costs of other Foundation activities and projects have averaged an additional \$10.00 for each person on FEE's mailing list.
3. That any expansion, and indeed, the continuation of FEE's efforts to supply publications to the thousands of teachers, students, clergymen, and others who request and use our material but find it difficult to help FEE financially, rests with those individuals, corporations, and trusts that can and will contribute from \$20.00 to \$10,000 annually.

Ungrounded Fear

A few persons worry that certain "big money" may dominate the Foundation's finances and

thus influence its work. Actually, FEE receives no single contribution that amounts to as much as 3 per cent of the total annual budget. The Foundation is free to work according to the best judgments of the individual staff members. Our own consciences, not the influence of any concentrated support, guide our work. This, we feel, is important to the

successful completion of the job that needs doing.

If the publications and other works of the Foundation are unacceptable to any donor, large or small, he is free to discontinue his support. That is the way it should be. And not infrequently, FEE pays that price of discontinued support for trying to be consistently honest in its work.



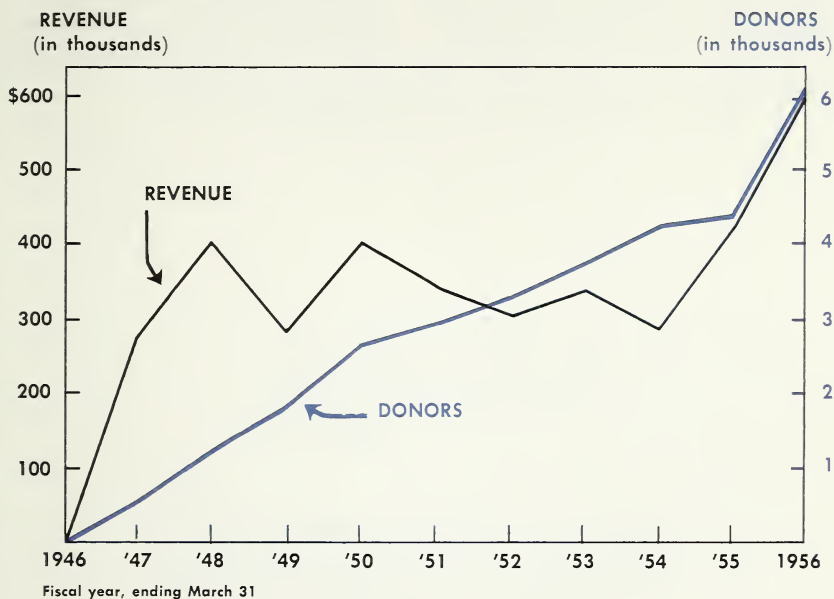
Part-time workers in FEE's basement mail room.

FEE's Donors

More than 40,000 individuals are on FEE's mailing list by request. All states and many countries are represented. The number of these who financially support FEE, either personally or through their firms or foundations, has been increasing each month. The following is a recent breakdown (June 20, 1956) by states, territories, and countries of all FEE Donors:

Alabama	29	New York	1,086	Canada	100
Arizona	37	North Carolina	36	Chile	1
Arkansas	18	North Dakota	16	Colombia	3
California	680	Ohio	402	Costa Rica	4
Colorado	61	Oklahoma	75	Cuba	3
Connecticut	180	Oregon	77	Denmark	2
Delaware	45	Pennsylvania	403	El Salvador	2
Florida	97	Rhode Island	16	England	15
Georgia	38	South Carolina	20	Ethiopia	1
Idaho	17	South Dakota	17	Finland	2
Illinois	591	Tennessee	55	France	6
Indiana	191	Texas	282	Germany	3
Iowa	68	Utah	41	Honduras	1
Kansas	48	Vermont	16	India	1
Kentucky	37	Virginia	95	Iran	1
Louisiana	44	Washington	224	Italy	11
Maine	25	West Virginia	34	Jamaica (Br. W. I.)	2
Maryland	91	Wisconsin	183	Japan	1
Massachusetts	200	Wyoming	9	Mexico	22
Michigan	283	Washington, D.C.	89	Netherlands	1
Minnesota	103	Alaska	9	New Zealand	2
Mississippi	8	Hawaii	9	Norway	1
Missouri	160	Puerto Rico	6	Panama	1
Montana	28	Aruba (Neth. W. I.)	1	Philippines	3
Nebraska	47	Argentina	3	Scotland	3
Nevada	12	Australia	5	Sweden	5
New Hampshire	20	Austria	1	Switzerland	5
New Jersey	237	Belgium	1	Union of	
New Mexico	11	Brazil	4	South Africa	1
					<hr/>
				TOTAL	6,824

FEE concluded its tenth fiscal year on March 31, 1956. The following chart traces the ups and downs in numbers of contributors and in annual revenue.



What of the Future?

What, many wonder, does the future have in store? The immediate past—1954 approximating an 8-year low with \$287,000, 1955 with \$433,000 and 1956 with an encouraging \$601,000—has only one clue to what's ahead. All of the increases came as if “from out the blue.” They were not engineered from the Foundation. FEE kept its eye on trying to

improve its work instead of on the cash drawers, and these increases came as voluntary responses.

And FEE will continue to keep its eye on improving explanations of free market, private property, limited government concepts, and the moral principles which underlie these concepts. The responses are in other hands.

It is important to add that

everyone's ideas are always welcome, even if they differ from those expressed in our publications, and whether or not that person is a donor, large or small.

Perhaps above all else, the Foundation is noteworthy for its

policy of living according to the theories it propounds—a voluntary society of independent, responsible persons. Individual responsibility and voluntary participation are about the only policies of operation it has.

Samples of publications or other information desired may be obtained by writing directly to the Foundation for Economic Education, Irvington-on-Hudson, New York.

Upon request, additional
copies of this pamphlet will
be sent to one address with-
out charge.

