1984

memo

on aims, activities, and methods

For those who are newly acquainted with The Foundation for Economic Education, this overview of our aims and activities will serve as an introduction to who we are and what we do.

Those who have been long-time friends and supporters of our work will be interested in this update of our outreach programs.

—John C. Sparks, *President*
—Robert G. Anderson, *Executive Secretary*

Our Task

The Foundation for Economic Education was founded in 1946 by Leonard E. Read and, until his death in 1983, was under his direction and leadership. From the very beginning the Foundation has been a first-source and supporting institution to individuals concerned about freedom. The real reasons for freedom can only be grasped through an understanding of the free market, private property, limited government way of life and its philosophical antecedents. To this end FEE has remained a consistent proponent of the ideal concept of human liberty and a critic of collectivism in any of its forms. FEE's assignment is for the Staff, and the growing number of individuals who voluntarily associate with us, to develop a better understanding of this philosophy ourselves while exploring ways of explaining it with ever-improving clarity.

Method

Replacing interventionist notions with the freedom philosophy—the only possible antidote to an expanding socialism—involves more than a mere belief in freedom ideas. Involved, also, are the means used to bring about the replacement.

FEE's uniqueness rests on the method advocated: Self-improvement. By reason of our many years of persistent emphasis on the improvement of self—as distinguished from attempts to reform others—there are today, in numerous walks of life, persons who serve as *wellsprings* of understanding and exposition. These persons are not so much trying to "reach the minds" of others; *they are trying first of all to achieve a quality in their own minds that others will reach for.* Only as this improvement-of-self corps increases in quality and quantity can the free market and individual liberty be more nearly approximated and interventionism be arrested.

What We Do Not Do

We do not tell anyone how to run his life; instead we try to explain how the free market makes for social harmony and peace. We do not participate in the political process; instead we present the rationale of limited government. We take no sides on specific legislation; instead we set forth the broad principles that should underlie all law. We have no "anti-communist" projects, but instead seek to demonstrate the similarities of democratic and totalitarian socialism and offer as the only antidote the practice of free market, willing exchange, private property, limited government principles.

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