

by Tom Johnson, who warned his co-workers against expecting encouragement during their generation.

What actuates a life such as Fred Leibuscher's? To the unobserving it may be a variety of human characteristics. But we who have known him for these decades know that a man who for three score years and more, literally lived with an ideal, must have possessed a democratic and catholic love of humanity, an accurate sense of justice, and a keen discernment between nature's way and the way of men. And finally, a practical determination to put dreams into practice.

The Practicality of Leibuscher

By JOSEPH H. FINK

About forty years ago, I undertook to act as chairman of the committee on outdoor meetings of the Manhattan Single Tax Club. Shortly thereafter, the question of a new president for the club came up. Mr. Leibuscher agreed to accept the presidency if I would take on the duties of secretary. To this I agreed. Leibuscher then asked me what his duties were to be. I told him that the duties of the President would be to preside at all the meetings and pay the expenses when there was no money in the treasury. "I accept," said he.

The political parties in Harlem, realizing that the Single Tax meetings were educating the public, made every effort to stop these street-corner meetings. Through their influence, the Chief Inspector of the Police Department gave orders that the meetings must cease. We appealed to him on several occasions but he insisted that they could only be conducted if a permit were issued, and that no permits would be granted. He made all sorts of statements to the effect that it was a violation of law to carry on street corner meetings.

Mr. Leibuscher and myself called on the Chief Inspector at his office at Police Headquarters for a show-down. Mr. Leibuscher insisted that the Inspector point out to him what sections of the law he referred to. After much discussion to and fro, the Inspector said that street corner meetings were a nuisance and they were stopped because of complaints. Mr. Leibuscher then told me to discontinue the meetings, and at the same time told the Inspector that when the political campaigns opened, he would have persons attend the meetings and make complaint to the police that they were a nuisance. Looking the Chief in the eyes, he said, "And if you don't stop these meetings, I will prefer charges against you to the Police Commissioner." Mr. Leibuscher was about five feet four and the Inspector six feet two. He looked down at Mr. Leibuscher with his jaw stuck out and said in a bombastic voice, "Do you mean that?" "Yes," replied Leibuscher. The Inspector changed his attitude and said "All right, go ahead and run your meetings, but keep away from 34th Street and Broadway." (These corners were perhaps the busiest in the entire city, and it would be impractical for anyone to attempt to hold meetings there.)

During his long and useful career, Leibuscher always stood for principle first and never was a compromisor.

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No account of Fred Leibuscher would be complete without mention of the frequent contributions during his lifetime to the various Georgeist activities, including LAND AND FREEDOM. He was exceptionally generous to the Henry George School of Social Science, of which he was a Trustee, having left the School a bequest of \$3,000, in addition to large amounts bestowed upon that organization before his death.

Thus Spake the Prophets

By JACOB SCHWARTZMAN

MILLENIUMS before Henry George appeared in the world, the little world of the Hebrews, huddled on the Asiatic Mediterranean, produced those early rebels against tyranny and injustice, known as the Prophets. Starting with Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and continuing with the twelve "minor" Prophets, this scorned and persecuted minority boldly cried out against the corruption and unbridled luxury of the judges, kings, priests and landlords on the one hand, and the stark poverty engulfing the masses of the Hebrew people on the other. Throughout the land misery and war prevailed, blood ran like water, factions opposed one another—and neighboring countries, sensing "kill," warred incessantly against the "chosen children of God," who, led by their corrupt leaders, gave more appearance of descent from the devil.

The great Isaiah—who may be considered a predecessor of Henry George—seeing the chaos, and witnessing the relentless pressure of the insatiate landlords, cried out in despair:

Woe unto those that cause house to join on house, and bring field near to field, till there is no more room, so that they may be left alone as the inhabitants in the midst of the land!

Therefore are my people led into exile, for want of knowledge; and their honorable men suffer of famine and their multitudes are panting with thirst.

Lamenting the poverty-stricken condition of the poor, as did Henry George, Isaiah bitterly denounces their oppressors:

O my people! thy leaders cause thee to err, and the direction of thy paths they corrupt.

The Lord is stepped forth to plead, and standeth up to judge the people.

The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of this people and their princes; but ye—ye have eaten up the vineyard; the plunder of the poor is in your house.

What mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind down the faces of the poor? saith the Lord the Eternal of hosts.

What liberal newspaper of today would dare to accuse the entrenched power of the possessors of the land with such vehemence? What prophet of today denounces with the same lofty motive the ill-gotten gains of the few?

Speaking with a voice of thunder, the majestic Prophet continues:

Woe unto those that decree decrees of unrighteousness and the writers who write down wrongful things;

Who turn aside from judgment the needy and who rob the just due of the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may plunder the fatherless.

The worthless person shall be no more called liberal, and the avaricious man shall not be said to be bountiful.

For the worthless person ever speaketh villainy, and his heart will work injustice, to practice hypocrisy, and to speak error against the Lord; to leave empty the soul of the hungry and the drink of the thirsty will he take away.

The instruments also of the avaricious man are evil; he deviseth wicked resolves to destroy the poor with words of falsehood, even when the needy speaketh what is right.

But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and he ever persisteth by liberal things.

Looking forward into the dim future, scanning the unborn centuries, the Seer of Israel envisions a society in which Justice prevails:

And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat their fruit.

They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for, as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and the work of their hands shall my elect wear out.

They shall not toil in vain, nor bring forth unto an early death.

Jeremiah, his heart torn by the prevailing unrighteousness, continues the struggle. With a determined courage, rare to find anywhere in the field of social thought, and all the more startling at a time when tyrants passed as staunch upholders of justice, this brilliant Prophet blasts the rulers of his day:

Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by injustice; that maketh his neighbor work without wages, and giveth him not the reward for his labor;

That saith, I will build me a roomy house, and ample chambers, and cutteth himself out windows, and ceileth it with cedar, and painteth it with colors. . . .

But thy eyes and thy heart are directed on nothing but upon thy own gain, and upon innocent blood to shed it, and upon oppression, and upon extortion, to practise them.

With a sadness that permeates his prophecy, the vigorous dreamer, Amos, describes the wretchedness enveloping the nation which he loved so much. In a sudden fit of anger, he cries against those who are responsible for the condition of the poor:

Ye who change justice into wormwood, and cast down

righteousness! . . . Ye tread down upon the poor, and ye take from him onerous contributions of corn!

For I know your manifold transgressions and your numerous sins; ye are those that are the adversaries of the just, that take a ransom, and that wrest the needy in the gate.

Remove thou from around me the noise of thy songs; and the playing of thy psalteries I will not hear.

But let justice roll along like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream.

His mood changes, and with a breadth of vision and a love of humanity, which alone should preserve him for posterity, gently he utters:

Are ye not like the children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the Lord. Have I not brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?

Perhaps the most social-minded of all the minor Prophets is Micah, who condemns the landlords with a violence tinged with hatred:

Woe to those that devise wickedness, and resolve on evil upon their couches! By the first light of the morning they execute it, if they have it in the power of their hand.

And they covet fields, and rob them; and houses, and take them away; so they defraud the master and his house, and the man and his heritage. . . .

Thus hath said the Lord concerning the Prophets that mislead my people, who when they have something to bite with their teeth, cry, Peace; but who prepare war against him who putteth nothing in their mouth.

Micah paints an enchanting picture of a society of brotherly love, where all nations shall be free and equal, all resting on the principle of liberty and justice. I should like to commend these passages to those who are intent upon destroying the little civilization still left this unfortunate earth:

And many nations shall come, and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us of his ways, and we may walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem.

And he shall judge between many people, and decide for strong nations even afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-knives; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall not learn any more war.

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, with none to make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.