



# What Kind of Recovery?

IT strikes us as not only futile but as an actual disservice to the millions of unemployed wage workers, bankrupt farmers and jobless professional people of all categories who face another terrible winter in these United States, to argue for some five and one-half pages, as *The New Republic* does in its issue for December 18, as to whether genuine recovery is here or not.

Recovery in the sense in which Stuart Chase foreshadows it in his article means, if it means anything at all, that the lords of monopoly capital, having overcome their errors as a result of the lessons of the crisis, are now willing to bow the government—the capitalist state—to develop and operate directly certain “new”—probably the least lucrative—industries. Mr. Chase says in his final conclusion:

But, as you may object, the government is not competent to develop new industries; its administrative techniques are deplorable. That is as may be. We can discuss the matter indefinitely, but it is not the story. We assumed that private industry could balance the system. I sought to find theoretical methods whereby the community itself might balance the system without revolutionary change. *If you find that the community is incompetent, you are then arguing in effect that community breakdown and revolution are inevitable.* That is your privilege. Personally, I think the state can develop new industries at least as well as the real estate speculators developed unrentable skyscrapers. It might do even a shade better [our own].

to catch in this form of argument, to put out of court all those adversaries who might not believe in the necessity of revolution, is that Mr. Chase deliberately tries to identify the government under the capitalist system with the “community.” The interests of the great majority of the people are *not* those of the capitalists, the bankers and their cowell-paid troubadours of the theatre, films and schools. There will continue to be, basic difficulties of social, cultural and economic nature, which this vast majority of the people and the minority ruling

“hold that the community

is incompetent.” This is a little demagoguery on the part of Mr. Chase—who some years ago was turning out books and doing his utmost in an individual attempt to salvage capitalism by eliminating waste in production and distribution.

But the competency of the “community” to run industry and supply the needs of the working population is a competency whose full possibilities—those of the workers of all categories—can be released fully *only* by cracking up the power of the present ruling clique of capitalists and establishing a government which really represents the economic and social needs of the useful section of the population—the majority. This, of course, *is* revolution—but this is what genuine recovery means for the millions of those now impoverished, humiliated and intimidated by the capitalists, their government and its recovery program that completely fails to benefit the masses.

The uneven development of capitalism—both as between industries and internationally, a specially destructive factor which Lenin applied from the findings of Marx and Engels to the period of imperialism—is something that seems to escape Stuart Chase entirely. He talks glibly of the possibilities of new industries through “issues of non-interest bearing credit,” presumably government credits. But what of the other industries whose special interests would be affected adversely by these new enterprises? And certainly there is nothing in the record of the last few years to indicate that the overlords of big industry are going to surrender to any such schemes. What has happened to the national housing campaign? What has happened to the rigid regulation of public utilities that was announced so triumphantly? Speaking in terms of the needs of unemployed and impoverished millions of this country, precisely nothing.

Let us take another question: that of immigration. It is not necessary here to give the statistics for immigration from the early period of capitalist expansion here to the second expansion period following the World War. It is enough to say that this influx of millions of workers who created enormous

amounts of surplus value and at the same time furnished probably the largest growing market that any capitalist was blessed with, no longer comes to our shores.

The desired enlarged market can come only in two ways—one by a rapid rise in wages, an increased share of workers in the products of industry and by what is called the “normal” increase in population by a surplus of births over deaths—or by a combination of the two.

But the capitalist class, especially in the big industries, is busy reducing the total income of the wage earners—by methods with which Mr. Chase appears to be familiar.

The economic and social standards of the entire working population have been reduced savagely during the six years of the crisis. The birth rate will continue to fall. The share of workers in industrial production will decrease. A permanent army of unemployed, whose minimum maintenance costs are assessed on the employed workers, is here.

Please, Mr. Chase, tell us why this is recovery? Profits have increased, yes, but by what enormous efforts and at what cost to the living standard and health of the working people of the richest country in the world.

When we said at the beginning of these notes that we thought your article and the introductory argument a disservice to the millions who face another terrible winter, we meant that this kind of writing, while it may have some interest for those social “welfare” workers who love to take a scalpel along in their case investigations of the causes and cure of poverty, only tends to create confusion and not the clarity that is needed today in all anti-capitalist circles. Such meanderings in the realms of futile money-credit theories encourage many to dodge and confuse the basic issue: that the evils of which you quite rightly complain will be cured only by a powerful industrial union-labor movement and by a powerful independent party of wage earners and farmers committed to uncompromising battle against a decadent and an increasingly cruel monopoly capitalism.