

# 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 our 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 opportunists 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.



WALL

# What the Victory Means

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON, Dec. 23.

**T**HE struggle between the British government and the British people—for it was nothing less—has resulted in an important though limited victory for the British people. The fall of Hoare and the appointment of Eden to the Foreign Office means that the whole line of world policy decided upon by the British cabinet cannot now be carried through immediately or in its present form.

Whether or not it means any more than this is not yet decided. But before we describe the next stage of the struggle let us be clear about how much is at stake, for what is at stake is not merely the question of the betrayal or support of Ethiopia, of loyalty or disloyalty to the covenant of the League. What is at stake is the peace of the world, for we now know that the British government was bent on nothing less than the complete destruction of every one of those barriers which stand in the way of fascist aggression.

A memorandum had actually been drawn by the British cabinet on what is called reconstruction of the League. The essence of this deadly document was that a controlling body was to be set up within the League. This body was to have all the power in its hands. It was to be composed of Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany. All the small powers and the Soviet Union were to be excluded from it. It is no doubt for a second whether this governing committee would steer? It would be straight for a German attack upon the Soviet Union.

Nothing else was the whole purpose of the plan, and I am informed that the clearer-minded members of the British cabinet had now reached a full consciousness of this. They had decided that at all times must be so arranged that German attack the Soviet Union during the coming years. The main achievement of this was nothing less than a spontaneous, organized but very real People's Front arose in Britain in the last two weeks in order to reveal and to check this whole of our policy.

It is now clear that we now know all this is more than that this line of policy has at the moment checked, for I do not think that this deadly scheme for what is the reorganization of the League will be pushed for some months at any rate, whether we have gained any more substitution of Eden for Hoare than a few months of delay remains to be decided almost entirely upon the pressure of British opinion upon

the government is maintained. If the British government can now be pushed along a policy of real cooperation with the other League states, if above all they can be forced to fix an early date for the application of oil sanctions, if a solid alliance for mutual defense by the League powers against any counter attack from Mussolini is cemented, then indeed we shall be on the way to gaining much more, for then we shall be on the way to forcing our rulers to pursue a policy which can undoubtedly keep the peace of Europe for a considerable period by making it clear that aggression by fascist states lead only to their downfall.

But this decisive success has still to be achieved. It is far too early yet to suggest that the British government has been forced into the path of peace. Their headlong progress down the path to immediate world war has been checked but we have still to drive them to take the first step down the other path. I believe, however, that the appointment of Eden reveals that they are now distinctly scared of the weight of public opinion (as well they may be) and that we have the opportunity of pushing them much further—if only the pressure is not relaxed for a moment.

If anyone thought that either the government or their spokesmen in the press had undergone a real change of heart, if anyone thought that their change of policy represented anything more than a yielding to a force which they could not resist, the comments of the whole capitalist press over the week-end should have dispelled their illusion. Mr. Baldwin himself told us that neither he nor anyone of his cabinet colleagues had any conception that their endorsement of the Hoare-Laval deal was contrary to their pledges at the general election. I really believe that in one sense this is true. But if so it reveals a sort of moral idiocy, as they sometimes say in the police courts, which cannot be exaggerated. Moreover, other spokesmen of the government and of the governing class made it perfectly clear that they have simply been forced off their essential policy by an outbreak of public protest which they never dreamt would occur and which they do not begin to understand.

The Observer, for example, quietly proposes that Sir Samuel Hoare should be rested for a few months while the clamor dies down, and then reappointed Foreign Secretary. Mr. Garvin, the editor of The Observer, ends his article on the peace terms with the words "Resurgam"—"They shall rise again." "Scrutator," an influential writer in the other great bourgeois Sunday paper, The Sunday Times, says in so many words that nothing was wrong with the actual

peace terms; the only trouble was they were clumsily put over. "The vice," he writes, "of this particular plan was not inherent or absolute but relative to the lack of preparation of the public mind." The Daily Telegraph, the government's own especial press organ, says the same thing even more crudely. The betrayal of Ethiopia, says their leader-writer, was "inexcusably abrupt." The next time we betray somebody or something, say Ethiopia or the peace of the world for instance, we must do it more gradually and suavely.

Not only the cabinet but the ruling sections of the governing class who control the great newspapers have not the faintest conception of why public opinion arose and smote them. They have simply yielded to what they see to be an uncontrollable force. They regard popular opinion in this country as a sort of wild beast which on this occasion unfortunately got loose and must therefore be humored and temporized with for a little while, until it can be corralled once more. If and when that has been accomplished they will immediately revert to their former policy of the betrayal of world peace. If they were forced down the path of genuine support of the League and genuine coercion of the aggressor it will be at the point of the bayonet of popular pressure alone.

*These cable dispatches by John Strachey appear weekly in The New Masses.*

## The Assumption of Song

Who have been to the Soviets carry  
Always blue in the eyes of the steep steppes  
Of snow.

Peal of Chimera from St. Basle.  
Eye torn out of history  
And the madness.

That glint on walls of ribald religion  
Is not gold,  
Is not love  
In the curious beds of luxury.

We have done away  
With progress, the phrase of billboard  
(Tiara in the comb  
Of my lady's hair).

Telescope the future of eons  
With the hard impact of steeled fist,  
Drunk with the power behind it.

The world of the proletariat  
Moves like a song,  
The Soviets singing.

NORMAN