status of the majority of the population, the working class. This is an old trick that Mr. Luckman uses and is by no means original with him. We well remember that Mussolini and Hitler employed this method of convincing their own miserable working class how well off they were, and the Soviet rulers still make use of it. Even the fact that real income for working class families may be slightly higher today than it was before the war does not signify they are any better off. Let us look at Mr. Luckman's claims.

Oh, Yeah!

(1) If there are 59 million workers on the job today, a large part of this work force is due to government spending for public works (relief) programs,* the armed forces, government subsidization of industry and production for military purposes. The "guns are better than butter" philosophy of Hermann Goering (may his bones rest in peace!) may very well come to be considered standard American idealogy. It is bad enough to be killed and maimed in our masters' wars. It is adding insult to injury to tell us how well off we are while we are engaged in forging the weapons for another slaughter.

(2) Figures on "liquid savings" are meaningless so far as a picture of mass prosperity is concerned. How many people are involved in the ownership of such savings? That's what counts. Does the majority of the population, the working class *generally speaking* have any bank savings? And does it mean anything important for those workers who may have a small bank account when they are constantly haunted by the fear of having to use it up?

(3) A 215 billion dollar personal income for 1949 looks quite impressive on paper. Does Mr. Luckman mean by this that all those who worked in 1949 had an income which conforms with what is commonly called the "American standard of living"? The kind that is usually pictured on billboards and in magazine advertising as a happy, well-fed and clothed family, living in a beautiful little bungalow in the suburbs, a new automobile in the garage etc? Isn't it more accurate to state that personal income for millions of tenement and apartment dwellers was not high enough in 1949 to support even their un-American standard of living without the cooperation of a working wife and mother?

4) Purchasing power, he says, is 53% higher than prewar. This may have been the latest figures at the time his speech was prepared but the newest information week by week indicates production being curtailed, unemployment rising and as a consequence purchasing power disappearing.

In fact the so-called postwar prosperity has been largely maintained for some time through installment selling. Restrictions placed by the Government on this type of business have been steadily withdrawn as total sales diminished until today there is once again an unrestricted green light for buying on installment. Add to these points the creation of a vast peace-time armed force and production of armaments and one sees the shaky foundation that American "prosperity" is actually built upon.

The burden of Mr. Luckman's speech was that there is not enough faith in America's future, that "Too many of us have accepted jabber-jitter estimates of what is wrong with America, instead of finding out for ourselves what is right with America." He called for a "renewal of faith in the vitality of our American way of life... not blind acceptance of things as they are (but)... the belief that we, in America, can make them better."

*A government commission has been set up to investigate and advise on the unemployment situation throughout the nation. Recommendations have been given already for New England, one of the hardest hit areas.

As We See It

As scientific socialists we do not wish to be included amongst those with the "jabber-jitters." We are not too worried about the prospect of a worse depression than the last, because we know that such an event will be merely a normal situation for capitalism. So far as we are concerned there is only one important thing wrong with America, or for that matter with any other country today, and that is the capitalist system of wages, prices, profits, money — the economy in which goods are produced for sale on the market rather than for use. We can never "renew" our faith in the vitality of our American way of life because we know that in the best of times capitalism can give nothing but insecurity and poverty to the majority of the population.

Relies on Markets

Mr. Luckman observes the wretched condition of America's workers and *takes heart*. He sees that:

"27 million Americans have no kitchen sinks; 18 million Americans lack washing machines; 25 million Americans lack vacuum cleaners; 1,000,000 American families need new homes this year; 40 million Americans have neither bathtub nor shower."

There is a terrific market as Mr. Luckman views it. "There is enough urgent work on hand," he said, "for every business now in existence — and for industries yet unborn — to keep busy for generations to come. In common sense we have no excuse for a recession, let alone depression." Ah yes! It takes brains to be a capitalist! It requires a college education to work one's way to the presidency of a company like Lever Brothers! This is the gentleman who, according to a "Special Release (on the speech) for Labor Press for Thursday, July 21" is "well known for his liberal and forthright dealings with labor." "Forthright" without a doubt but not nearly liberal enough in his estimate of workers' needs. He might have continued his list ad infinitum to give business added heart for centuries, let alone generations to come.

Unfortunately for this cock-eyed theory, goods are not produced under this system with the object of satisfying human needs. Production is carried on within capitalism for the sole purpose of profits which belong to the capitalists. If millions of workers need bathtubs it is because it is not profitable to produce enough tubs for everyone and it will take more than inspired speeches to satisfy this need. The reason so many workers go without the bare essentials that Mr. Luckman listed and many more is not, as he sees it, because of a lack of good salesmen (a theory currently also receiving a lot of attention in the press), or because business does not have enough faith in the future of America. They don't have these essentials because they are too poor, and workers are poor because they are *workers* and for no other reason. It is not unemployment, nor "jabber-jitters" that causes poverty and depressions but the basic, fundamental relationships of wage-labor and capital.

Snags

A clue to the real cause of the present gloom in American business that Mr. Luckman deplores is brought out by him in his presentation of the foreign situation. But he missed the point entirely. In commenting on the success of the Marshall Plan he stated:

> **"The member nations of the Plan have already returned to a prewar level of industrial output. This has taken four years, but a return to a prewar level of production after the First World War took almost seven years."**

It may be true that the ERP nations, before the war took 38%, "or the largest share of our exports." It may also be true that by "increasing the living standards of other areas, we can expect to find a wider market for American goods."

The point Mr. Luckman missed, however, is that a serious contradiction takes place here. By building