these professors from their employers' economic system to the shoulders of Old Sol. This argument, however, did not seem to capture the imagination of the workers to any great extent. It doesn't seem to be widely held today.

### THE PSYCHO THEORISTS

Another, and more popular school of thought seems to hold that depressions are purely psychological, and as such can be argued out of existence through the use of moral persuasion and by appealing to the workers' sense of patriotism. One noted radio commentator was recently heard to declaim that those who talk depression in the U. S. are giving aid and comfort to Joe Stalin who must certainly regards such pessimists as "his boys."

Or we are informed perhaps that talk of factory lay-offs is merely a lot of propaganda, a dirty Republican trick to discredit Mr. Truman who warned the nation so eloquently during his recent campaign on the inevitability of a depression should the Democrats be defeated last November.

According to this school all that is needed to lick any depression is for people to keep their chins up, deny that times are getting bad, exude confidence and keep plugging.

### THE "ECONOMISTS"

There are also those, of course, who recognize that hard times are caused by the nature of the economic system we live under, but who feel that the government can intervene at will to forestall economic busts. This theory recently attained full bloom, when in 1946 while at the crest of a record period of employment, the 79th Democratic Congress passed the Full Employment Bill. Under that law a permanent council of three full-time economic advisers to the President was set up at salaries of $15,000 a year. These experts are supposed to advise the administration and Congress what the government should and should not do to help the economy function smoothly and prosperously.

The declared purpose of the bill, is "to foster and promote free competitive enterprise and the general welfare, conditions under which there will be afforded useful employment, protection and purchasing power." The President, in signing the bill declared that it was a "commitment by the government . . . to take any and all of the measures necessary for a healthy economy." In other words the capitalist class of America is attempting to eliminate depressions by outlawing them, making them illegal.

Depressions, however, are not caused by spots on the sun or a faulty frame of mind. Nor can the government either regulate the tides or guarantee full employment by means of legislative enactments. We live in a commodity society where goods are produced for sale on the market. When markets are plentiful because of global wars and destruction or "Marshall Plans" for reconstruction, employment can be maintained at a fairly high level. But unfortunately for the capitalists, they must intersperse their wars with "peace" and it only requires so much rebuilding until the flattened nations have become revived sufficiently to resume production and compete themselves for markets.

An interesting contradiction in capitalist society arises at this point. It can be shown that America's chief market for consumer goods is right here in the U. S. Why is it that in a country of 140 million people, the overwhelming majority of whom certainly need all sorts of items such as refrigerators, cars and washing-machines, not to mention food, clothing and houses, a lucrative market cannot be maintained. It would almost seem that the capitalists should force their workers to ask for more wages so as to have the means with which to buy their products.

The trouble here is of course, that as *buyers* of the commodity labor-power, the capitalists must seek ways and means to cut wages, not raise them. Competition forces them to keep the wage rate at a minimum or go under.

The workers, then, are in the position of a slave class that can never get more from capitalism than what it takes on the average to produce and reproduce their labor-power.

When capitalism reaches the point where huge surpluses of commodities overflow the warehouses despite the fact that millions of workers are in want; when the capitalists are themselves satiated with limousines, yachts and country estates; and when hitherto lucrative outside markets shrink because of competition, depression appears on the scene. That is what is happening today, and the trend will be, despite hoped-for seasonal unemployment cuts, for employment to decrease. Small factories will continue to close down or be gobbled up by the big ones; large factories will move to more economical areas; wholesalers and retailers will in many cases go out of business.

While actual depression and economic collapse may still be around the corner as of this date there is nothing that can be done within the framework of capitalism to forestall it. Nothing, that is, short of a 3rd world war. And while the capitalists may be able to organize their relief agencies more quickly and more efficiently than was the case a couple of decades ago, the net result can still mean nothing but greater impoverishment for the worker.

This, then, is the future for the working class under capitalism. The more they produce the faster they work themselves out of a job. Instead of increased production resulting in an increase in the standard of living, as the capitalists and the union officials have been telling us, we have produced so much and so efficiently that many of us have already been given our retirement on unemployment insurance for a brief period with the prospects of many more to follow.

There is, however, a way out of the jungle of depressions and wars if the workers will but only recognize it and take steps. This escape route will involve a certain amount of serious thought and study, but the results will be well worth the time and effort. When the workers decide to try some thinking for themselves on the subject, instead of swallowing the weird theories that are handed out via the capitalist controlled sources of information, they should readily recognize their slave status in society. We will then be well on the road to a class-less, wage-less, war-less society, a system where in each will give according to his abilities and have free access to all that is produced. Under socialism, there will be leisure not unemployment.

HARMO

*This figure is apparently arrived at through a study of unemployment insurance information. It cannot give an accurate picture due to the fact that a fairly large percentage of American workers are not covered by the Act.

---

## Soup Kitchen Business Brisk

"Soup kitchens" are operating in Vancouver to fill the stomachs of hungry men who have exhausted their unemployment insurance benefits or are not eligible for any.

Shaven and unshaven, clean and unkempt, with the haggard look that comes from weeks of desperation, hundreds of forlorn men haunt the premises where social agencies ladle soup by the bowl or hand out meal tickets.

Most of the 27,000 unemployed in Vancouver can get by with their savings and unemployment insurance, but some do not qualify for federal insurance or for municipal and provincial aid. These the welfare organizations aid with food or lodging.

VANCOUVER NEWS HERALD,
February 23, 1949

---

**PASS THIS COPY ON TO A FRIEND**