

## Are We Finished?

THE LAST TEN YEARS of continuous unemployment have given birth to a new theory of defeatism. The intelligentsia of our campuses, having had a fling at legislative enactment of their silly economic concepts, are saving face by a rare bit of rationalization.

The United States has attained its "full economic growth." Further productive expansion is impossible. With the disappearance of the last frontier there is no room for free enterprise. We have reached a static economy, and it is the business of government to operate it. Gradually the politicians must take over and plan our way of living.

This, of course, is the New Deal apology for its failure to bring about recovery. Neither Republicans nor Democratic opponents of the New Deal have any understanding of economic fundamentals, and are therefore at a loss to meet this philosophy of despair. In principle there seems to be a tacit agreement with the sage of Hyde Park, and this is the weakness of his political enemies. They have nothing better to offer.

It is a fallacy that government does or can produce anything. At best, government is merely specialized service. So that we who engage in production may continue to do so effectively, we employ teachers, firemen, traffic officers, to take over the duties that can best be done collectively. Instead of a volunteer fire department we have a paid fire department; instead of giving up so many days in the year for road repairing, we pay road builders so many days' work in order that we may concentrate on the production of goods.

When government goes beyond these simple services and presumes to engage in the production of things it is competing with capital and labor. Since government is monopolistic in character it is wasteful. It cannot be efficient because it is not subject to competitive standards. Its very inefficiency prompts it to destroy competition by law, or by subsidizing itself through taxation at the expense of the labor and capital with which it competes.

Since the object of production is the satisfaction of desires, and since human desires are unlimited, there can be no final "attainment of economic growth." There may be a dying economy,

but there is no static economy. Every satisfaction brings about a new desire, every generation gives birth to new wants, new hopes. It is only by force, by public or private robbery, that the human urge for more and higher gratifications is suppressed. An economy which is not dynamic is a slave economy, and that is decay.

There is no limit, save our natural resources, to what we can produce. And since the end-all and be-all of production is consumption there can be no point of saturation. There may be—and this our intelligentsia stupidly refuse to see—only artificial limits to our economy, limits created by government in the interests of predatory groups. Our economy cannot continue to expand if every advance of productive enterprise merely increases the tribute to privilege. We cannot consume what is taken away from us. Robbery stops production.

To substitute for an oligarchy of private monopoly the more predatory oligarchy of government monopoly is merely to hasten our economy, and our consequent social standards, downward.