

The Rochester Plan

Now comes a new economy—the stamp economy. We live by stamps, nice orange and blue ones.

The plan was inaugurated in Rochester, N. Y., last month, and it worked so well that it was moved on for further experimentation to Dayton, Ohio. Everybody voted it a huge success. Now it is to be extended to Seattle. Production is dead. Long live stamps!

The stamp plan was designed by—you guessed it—Washington economists. It's so simple. In Rochester, if you are lucky enough to be on relief—and one out of every five persons in that city is lucky—you have the privilege of spending all or a part of your relief check on orange stamps, which may be "bought" from a local commissar. For each two orange stamps another commissar gives you one blue stamp. The orange stamps may be exchanged for any necessity, but the blue ones may be used only to purchase commodities on the "surplus" list. Thus "surpluses" are reduced, retailers get new business, price structures are preserved and the needy fed. God bless our Washington economists.

But the economists have devised an even better plan for Dayton. Although the Rochester plan is good, it has the disadvantage of being voluntary. Perhaps some of the re-

liefs have retained some spark of manhood after being debauched by the system; to drown their manly sorrows they may buy some nectar of forgetfulness. To deny the relief—er any such escape, our Washington economists have decreed that in Dayton he will get a voucher which is exchangeable for food only.

"It is as perfect a plan as can be devised," declared the president of the food merchants association. The president of a chain of food stores echoed this praise. Stamp buyers were exultant: "We get better meals, and the storekeepers treat us fine." The director of the food stamp division—i.e., a big commissar—was "gratified." Secretary Wallace—than whom there is no wiser Washington economist—hinted that the government has broader ideas than merely food distribution; he was quite "encouraged" by the Rochester experiment.

So low have Americans fallen.