

The Bond Between Us

By Winston
Churchill

What's our place today in the world economic picture? No one is in a better position to say than Winston Churchill. From a situation of influence and authority he has watched that picture take shape. Here he brings the searchlight of his experience to bear upon our problems

A British View of Our N.R.A.

Although I most cordially agree with and acclaim President Roosevelt's policy of raising wholesale prices to the levels of normal years, it is impossible not to feel a grave anxiety—for we are all to a large extent in the same boat—about his policy of controlling all the businesses of the United States and regulating so minutely and in such a short time the delicate interplay between capital and labor. On this side of the Atlantic we are unable to judge whether such an experiment will succeed. We devoutly hope it will succeed. But the British trade union system and its influence in British industry has been a plant of very slow and gradual growth. One wonders whether such a change can be introduced in a few months into American industry for the purpose of meeting an emergency. Still, there are few things that cannot be done by a great and educated democracy if everybody acts together in good comradeship and good will.

Over here they sometimes don't. But when it comes to shortening the hours of labor in a time of unparalleled unemployment, one feels that the President is again marching along the high road of national and international salvation. We speak of the improvement of modern machinery as "labor saving." What does "labor saving" mean? Does it mean simply that some laborers are to work as long and as hard as ever, while millions of others are to be told that they will never be wanted again? If so, machinery and invention would be a curse to the wage-earning classes, and we might well ask, "Where were the Luddites wrong when they riotously destroyed the new engines which were destroying them?" But if "labor saving" means that the wage-earning masses are, with the aid of machinery, to make the same amount of things for something like the same wage in a shorter time, and have more leisure, then indeed will machinery and invention be a gift and a blessing to mankind. Surely this is one of the simple basic conclusions to which the working classes in every country should give their allegiance. Surely a shortening of the hours of labor is the first of the governing levers by which unemployment, the displacement or surplus of labor, should be corrected.

I can hardly describe with what eagerness, not only our working people, but all those who think about social problems in this island, are watching the results of President Roosevelt's valiant effort to solve the riddle of the sphinx. Once again the United States has become a pioneer, breaking with sturdy axemanship a path through the forest, and striving not only to blaze a trail, but to make a road which, if ever it is opened, the world will surely follow.