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### **MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.**

Series IV: Sermons, 1914-1963, undated.

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Capital and Labor, 1918.

## CAPITAL AND LABOR

1. Read Barbusse

2. Men have frequently asked me - Is God in war - and I answered yes - for God is in pain which disciplines to higher motives and achievements.

A. It has been my faith that something great would come out of the war - because I felt that God was in the war. A year ago Thanksgiving, when we felt that there was so little to thank God for, I spoke on "Is God in this war?" and I said that a new revelation will be vouchsafed suffering humanity. Today another on the eve of Thanksgiving - when we have so much to be thankful for - I am convinced that God was in the war - for ~~now~~ now that the clouds of war are rolling by we can behold the beauty and the splendor of the new order that shall come to pass. The glistening tears of mankind are imperceptibly forming as in bright hopes and the passionate cries sounded the annunciation of the new day and with the red, red blood of peoples has been inscribed a new testament of the rights of man, (the dignity labor) and the holiness of life.

3. The war has bequeathed unto us a heightened sense of justice, a wider human sympathy, a passionate intolerance of wrong, a questioning, critical attitude of mind, a fearless desire of experimentation, a sublime disregard for useless conventions, a determination to right the wrongs of the world, to pave the way for a higher order of life where men will ( ) the faith which life abundantly ( ).

4. The jungle of lies has been cleared, but the work of cultivation is unending else the jungle will grow up again. We must conserve the gains of war by embodying them in definite plans of social life in institutions and laws - else the enthusiasm will wane and slowly die - and we shall be left with naught but ruins and aching hearts - and the children that will come after us will say to us in pity - they knew how to die for truth but knew not how to live for it. The God they found in war, they lost in peace --

5. The war has left as a laudable ( ) with our ( ). The dis. was not of the war's making,, but the war ( ) the faculties of men and the cunning were ( ) readily defeated. Besides, we were prone to self-examination



and frequent confession - and in the presence of death - we became ( ).

We said - The state is supreme - True! The state is deserving of our devotion. True!

Well! The state can place us in a dirty trench to be ( )-ridden and frost-bitten, to be hacked, and mutilated - and murdered! Well! We owe it to our country!

But doesn't the country owe something to us! Are we not entitled to enjoy a little of the wealth with which our country is blessed? Are not our children entitled, etc. and our wives. There is so much beauty in life - books, pictures, education, travel, why should we be deprived of all these - and others have them in profligate abundance when their responsibilities are no greater than ours?

While we are fighting our enemies beyond our bodies let's fight the enemies within! Let's build with our sweat and blood a more beautiful world for ( ) our children to live in!

6. And so while the war did not at all begin as a struggle of labor for justice, in fact it is quite likely that the reverse was true - that Germany wished this war so as to crush ~~the~~ a growing labor force within the empire - it has resolved itself into a war not alone upon political authority but upon industrial authority as well.

7. Politically the war has killed three lies -

1-

Feudalism - the legend or fiction of the constituted lord and the villain - of master and slave, of governing and the governed! Of classes in society. For that's what autocracy means - that's really what militarism means - equality before the law. Political classes.

2- Competition - The destiny of a nation to destroy or be destroyed.

3- Survival of the fittest - ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ( ) Possession of power, justification of power -

8. We have smashed the lies.

1- There can be no political classes, only political parties.  
Men are equal before the law.

2- There must be no bloody competition but mutual cooperation -  
League of Nations.



3- Survival of the best, not the fittest, and best is not force  
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~  
 but spirit. Conquest in spirit and for the spirit ~~by~~ not by force and for force  
 itself.

9- Now the world is demanding the smashing of the same lies - industrially.

1- Destruction of feudalism - of industrial classes, of master and wage earner. There is no divine right of capital or property just as there is no divine right of kings - capital as well as labor must serve the best interest of the state - else it must go - There can be no autocracy in industry.. Who can say, This is my business and nobody has a right to interfere. The wealth is entrusted to him by society.

2- Competition - Class struggle (quote Crane). There must be no class struggle in America - not competition but cooperation. (Carlyle).

3- Survival of the fittest is a lie - assuming that every wealthy man achieved his wealth by his own energy and brain. If it is a question of being the fittest then all capital can be overthrown over night by rising labor. Survival of the true - the good - the right! Opportunity for all.

10. What labor wants is industrial freedom - i. e., a voice in industry. Read British Labor Party's manifesto, (p. 27)

11. American labor is not revolutionary. It is not even socialistic. It may be goaded to extremes by narrow-minded capitalists and stand-patters.

12. Already the owls (?) of night are ( ). Let's restore them. Not ( ) but restore. The cohorts of privilege are arraying ( ) for the struggle. I have often ~~XXXXX~~ said that the greatest enemy of capital is the unscrupulous capitalist, just as the greatest friend of prohibition was <sup>the</sup> ( ) saloon keeper. They both work for their own destruction.

13. There is no room in America for Bolshevism, that vile excretion of Czarism. But the Bolshevi was fashioned by the Czar - the bitterness of his ( ), his resentment, his hatred of properties, men were forced into ~~XXX~~



his soul by feudal Russia. America will not tolerate the father of Bolshevism - the autocrat, plutocrat, boss.

14. We have made progress during the war, in -

- 1- Government regulation or control
- 2- Taxation - 200 billions of debts
- 3- Public insurance
- 4- Regulating capital and labor.

B. Let's conserve the gains - and work out a policy of economic ( ).

C. Above all, capital and labor have united in the war - let this union continue in ( ) - poverty, etc.

15. Opportunity of religion.

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."



1374



the joining of hollow phrases, but you will rise against these falsifiers.

This is what you are fighting for, Poilu. For a magnificent booty: not the one you put into your pocket or that you take from corpses; not either for a wretched premium or gratuity, or for plunder and conquest, or for a crime that is not excusable because the epithet "collective" is pinned to it. No! you are fighting for justice, goodness, and beauty, and—in fine—for labor and the happiness and prosperity of all. Ever uphold and maintain this ideal. You have the right to have and manifest your opinion in the immense tragedy where you have paid for your place. It is a holy task for the writers to tell you what you are fighting for. What you have fought for, O invincible people—you very soon will shout it, rising undivided.

• HENRI BARBUSSE.

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### *Peanuts*

We have made cages  
Around all our emotions  
And we walk,  
Quite safely,  
In the zoo in which we have put them,  
And feed them  
Peanuts.

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.



# The Errors of Class

BY DR. FRANK CRANE

Copyright, 1917.

Sometimes it seems there is but one crime; it is Class—but one enemy to society, progress, government, the peace of the world and the soul of man; it is Class.

It's Class spirit that makes the junker, that makes war.

It is Class spirit that makes the capitalist offensive, and the laborite dangerous.

It is Class that makes the duchess a vulgar snob, and the stenographer hateful and suspicious.

Class! Good Lord! How we are everlastingly appealing to it to accomplish our ends, and everlastingly discovering that we have raised a devil we cannot lay.

It is Class that was at the bottom of slavery. It is Class that makes the army official cruel and inconsiderate. It is Class that makes the religionist a prig and the millionaire a fool.

If we could only remember that we are all the same flesh, all come out of the same nothingness and will soon be covered over by the same kind of clods, that beneath the vasty galaxies we're all pigmies, before the sweeping storms of time we are all insects, that in the sunbeam of eternity we are all little motes, and upon the broad bosom of destiny's river we are all but floating leaves!

But no, man, proud man, this flashing ephemerid, this tumbler-beetle on the road of time, whose brief life hardly ventures into the morrow, man, proud man,

Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make the angels weep.

And herein exactly lies the error of the labor movement, and of all the cohorts of protest. They insist on developing the crime of Class. Most of them are Class crazy.

Now if I'm going to be classy I'll be an aristocrat, junker and nabob, and be done with it. I'd be of the Class that's IN and ON TOP.

I don't see any fun in being of the submerged Class. Consequently I refuse to be of any Class at all.

I do not recognize any labor problem. It is the problem of humanity.

The Class war is humbug. The real war is the war of common sense and democracy against all Class.

Roger W. Babson, in a speech the other day, uttered some truth. He said:

"Labor, however, is mistaken in the methods which she uses to better her condition. Instead of striving directly for more opportunities, the masses seem to be working for special privileges for themselves—the same as the capitalistic class now have for themselves. Labor can never take away special privilege from the rich by securing special privilege for itself."

The capitalist who thinks he can get along without the laborer is a fool.

Likewise the laborer that thinks the capitalist superfluous is a fool. Says Mr. Babson:

"It is the brains, the enterprise, the courage, and the judgment of the capitalistic class which is doing the big things today. Without these industrial leaders the laboring people of the United States would at once sink into an economic condition comparable to that of the peons of South America."



"The Garfield Hotel"

3848 PROSPECT AVENUE  
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1. Read Buckner —

H.

2. Men have frequently asked me - Is God in war - and I answered yes - for God is in pain which demands higher virtues & achievements —

a - It has been my faith that something great <sup>would</sup> come out of the war - we felt that God was in the war. A year ago I don't say when we felt that there was so little to thank God for I spoke

on "Is God in the war" — and I said that a new revelation will be wrought by this war. To-day on the eve of another Thanksgiving when we have so much to

thank God for - I am convinced that God was in the war - for the new that other clouds, war & rolling by we can behold the beauty & the splendor of the new things order that shall come to pass —



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The glistering ~~then~~ tears of mankind  
are ~~being~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~human~~ <sup>human</sup> ~~unfathomably~~ <sup>unfathomably</sup> ~~forming~~  
in bright hopes and the passionate  
cries have sounded the annunciation  
of the new day and with the red red  
blood of peoples has been inscribed  
the new Testament of the rights of  
man (the dignity of labor) & the holiness  
of life.

3. The war has bequeathed unto us  
a concentrated heightened sense of  
justice, a wider human sympathy, a  
permeate understanding of wrong, a  
questioning, critical attitude of  
mind, a fearless desire of experimen-  
tation, a sublime disregard for  
useless conventions, a determination  
to right the wrongs of the world  
and to pave the way for a higher order  
of life where men will ~~prefer~~ <sup>find</sup> ~~in~~  
peace the tasks which life will otherwise  
give.



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4. The jungle of lies has been cleared, but the ~~heart~~<sup>world</sup> of cultivation is unending else the jungle will grow up again - we must conserve the gains & war by embodying them in definite plans of social life and in institutions and in laws - Else the enthusiasts will waste & slowly die - and we shall be left with naught but ruins and aching hearts - and the children that will come after us will say of us in pity - they knew how to die for truth but knew not how to live for it - they ~~wealth~~<sup>gave</sup> ~~themselves~~ they found in war, they lost in peace -

5. The war has left us a laudable surrender fact in with our errors. The dis. was not of the war's making. but it was hypersensitely told the ~~things~~ <sup>frictions</sup> of men and the wrong were more readily deflected - Besides, we were prone to self-examination & to honest confessions - and in the presence of death - we became honest.



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We said - The state is supreme. True!  
The state is deserving, our devotion.  
True! The state can take us & de-  
prive us, our enterprises! Well! The state  
can place us in a dirty trench to  
be lacerated & rent-bitten - to be  
hunted & mutilated & murdered! Well!  
We owe it to our country! But  
doesn't the country owe something  
to us! Are we not entitled to enjoy  
a little of the wealth with which our  
country is blessed? Are not our  
children entitled etc. Four wives -  
There is so much beauty in life - Books  
pictures - education - travel - why should  
we be deprived of all these - & others  
have them in profuse abundance  
when their responsibilities are no greater  
than ours? I.

While we are fighting our enemies  
beyond our borders let's fight  
our enemies within! Let's build  
with our sweat & blood a more  
beautiful world for ourselves &  
our children to live in. I.



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6. And so while the war did not at all begin as a struggle of labor for justice. In fact it is quite likely that there ~~was~~ <sup>is</sup> even here - that for. wished this was so as to crush the aspiring labor forces within the empire - it has resolved itself into a war not alone upon polit. authority but upon industrial authority as well.

7. Politically the war has killed 3  
things -

1. Feudalism - the legend of fiction of the constituted lord & the villain - of master & slave, & the governing & the governed. & classes in society. for that's what autocracy means - that's really what ~~unhappiness~~ <sup>unhappiness</sup> means - Equality before the law. Political Classes.

2. Competition. The destiny of a nation to destroy or be destroyed.

3. Survival of the fittest - struggle - ~~competition~~ <sup>competition</sup> & power justification & power.



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8. We have smothered the lies.

1. There can be no pol. classes only  
publ. parties. Men are equal before  
the law.

2. There must be no bloody competition  
but mutual cooperation & leagues  
& nations —

3. survival of the fittest not fittest.  
and test is not force but spirit.  
Conquest in spirit & for the spirit  
not by force & for self —

9. Now the world is demanding the  
smothering of the same lies — makes  
it ally.

1. destruction of feudalism — of nobles.  
Classes, of masters & wage earners.  
There is no divine right of capital  
or property for as there is no divine  
right of things — Capital as well as  
labor must seek the best interest.  
the state — else it must go — There  
can be no autocrats in industry  
who can say — This is my business  
& no body has a right to interfere. The  
wealth is entrusted to him by society



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(Care)

2. Competition - Class Struggle -

There must be no class struggle  
in Am. No competition but co-operation  
to us (Carlyle). ~~was~~

3. Survival of the fittest is a lie - assuming  
that every wealthy man achieved  
his wealth by his own energy & brain.  
If it is a question of survival - then  
all capital has been overthrown over  
night by rising labor - Survival  
of the fittest - the fittest - The right!  
Opportunity for all.

10. What labor wants is industrial  
freedom - i.e., voice in industry - <sup>equality</sup> & opportunity.  
Read British Labor Party's  
manifesto - (p. 27).

11. Am. labor is not revolt. It is not even  
socialistic. It may be forced to extremes  
by narrow-visioned capitalists &  
shrewd politicians.



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12. already the owls, night are  
cavorting - let's restore them. not  
reconstruct but restore. The  
whites, privs eye are arraying  
in the struggle. - I have often said  
that the greatest enemy of capital  
is the unscrupulous capitalist  
just as the greatest friend of prolet-  
arians was the ~~unscrupulous~~ <sup>saloon-keeper</sup>. They both work  
for their own destruction -
13. There is no room in Am. of the  
Bolshevism - that vile excrement  
of Czars. But the Bolshevists  
was fashioned by the Czar -  
the bitterness of his soul his  
venturesomeness, his hatred of  
property men were poured into  
his soul by feudal Russia &  
~~him~~ Am. will not tolerate the Bol. but  
she will not tolerate the father of



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Wishes - The automatic, plus -  
Oratic, boss -

14. We have made paper during  
the war - in.

- 1- Govt regulation or control.
- 2- Taxation - 200 billions, debts
- 3, Public Turn.
- 4, Regul. Capital & labor.

B. Let's consider the future & work  
out a policy, even reconstruction.

C. About all Cap. & labor have united in  
war - but still unimpaired in war  
on dependence in overseas etc.

15. Opportunities & help in

"They shall not hurt nor destroy  
in all my holy mountain: for the  
earth shall be full of the knowledge of  
the Lord, as the waters cover the  
sea."