

May 11, 1985

Dear Robert Hill,

Thanks for your letter of 4/21 which was sent to the Detroit address while I am now with News and Letters in Chicago. Just in case you didn't see the report of both the speech I gave at WSU Archives and the exhibit itself which by now includes my Archives forward to 1985 and back to the early 1920s, I am sending you the copy of News & Letters which includes this material. Those early years happens to be when I was both a member of the founding Congress of Negro Labor as well as writing for its paper Negro Champion. It is indeed when I also met Garveyites.

I was very young and hardly knew all the ramifications of that encounter, and yet, even before that year, 1925, it was the Black Dimension that first attracted me to American Marxists. The year was 1922, when I first came to the United States; I was twelve and the red flag in a ghetto food store, as well as the neighborhood itself, identified that group in my mind with the Russian Revolution. I was in Chicago and I always appreciated the American authorities for stopping mass immigration to New York, for Chicago was indeed the center of all revolutionary movements. The Palmer Raids attacked the Communists, Garveyites, socialists and their Black Dimension in A. Philip Randolph's The Messenger and the anarchists. After all, it was the 1917 Russian Revolution as well as the barbaric race riots that the returning Black GIs met in 1919-20 that were the Great Divide between right and left in the United States. It is this which signified the totality of the period which confronted Garvey.

Because in the last month I received Vol. 3 of the Marcus Garvey Papers which centered on the year 1921, that brought back all those memories to me, I very much missed seeing a reflection of that totality in Vol. 3. Garvey, I felt, did grasp those facts, that totality, as witness his complimentary references to Lenin, Trotsky, the Russian Revolution and led him to the invitation to Rose Pastor Stokes to address his Black convention, the very convention that expelled the African Brotherhood. He said what he meant had been achieved in Russia, and he wants Africa for the Africans -- and by Africans he meant all Blacks be they African or be they Americans, or West Indians, the Caribbeans; he really never made a distinction between Chicago and Africa, or between New York and Jamaica, or St. Louis and Haiti. Everywhere in the world is where his vision led him to. Ah, well, each editor has his own way of relating to his Subject.

I am too busy with preparations for my new book which was suppose to have come off the press on International Women's Day, March 8, but because of the sudden death of the founder of Humanities Press, has suffered much delay. It will probably not be published until June or July, therefore I will not have time to review the new Marcus Garvey volume, but I am sure that Lou Turner, our Black World columnist (who reviewed the first two volumes) will review the third. I will send you a copy.

No, I am not one for indulging in biographies, and least of all

in autobiographies. It is true that for the first time upon the urgings of Dr. Philip Mason, Director of the WSU Archives, I ~~seem~~ to have departed from my principle that it is not the biography of an individual that is of historic-philosophic importance, but that of an idea. You will have noted I am sure, that in my presentation of March 21, where I did go back to some personal experiences, it is only when the subjective experience crosses an objective event, and that on an international scale.

You can see that I got lonesome enough for Chicago that now only I, but the American Marxist-Humanists are here. Have you ever been to Chicago? Do let me know if you plan any such trip; you will be welcome at my home.

Yours sincerely,

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THE MARCUS GARVEY PAPERS
AFRICAN STUDIES CENTER
280 KINSEY HALL
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90024

21st April 1985

Dear Ray:

This is just a quick note to offer you my congratulations on the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs' Exhibit, "Marxist-Humanism, 1941 to Today: Its Origin and Development in the U.S." I regret that I shall be unable to view the exhibit myself, but I am sure that it will have a large and appreciative audience.

Congratulations also on the completion of your new opus, Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution. I look forward to its appearance as I have all your other works.

Have you thought any about working on your political autobiography? Am I being presumptuous to broach the subject? Your life encompasses so much of the history of the Marxism over the past sixty or so years that it would be greatly rewarding to have you recount it for us in detail.

With very best wishes, I am pleased to remain

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Hill".

Robert A. Hill,
Editor.

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