

THE CLASS APPEAL OF MARCUS GARVEY'S PROPAGANDA AND HIS
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BLACK AMERICAN LEFT THROUGH
AUGUST 1920

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the class appeal of Marcus Garvey's propaganda and his relationship with the black American left through the end of his movement's formative years to reveal aspects of his political thought that are not entirely represented in the historiography. Although several historians have addressed Garvey's affiliation with the black American left there has not yet been a consummate study on the nature of that relationship. This study examines the class element of Garvey's propaganda from his formative years through his radical phase, tracing the evolution of his ideas and attributing factors to those changes.

Garvey influenced and was influenced by the labor movement and the class appeal of his propaganda was much stronger than historians have allowed. Garvey ultimately distanced himself and his program from the left for a number of reasons. The United States Justice Department's campaign to infiltrate his organization and remove him at the height of the Red Scare caused him to distance his program from the left. Since Garvey was pragmatic, not ideologically driven, and economic theory was secondary to black autonomy in his philosophy, increased criticism from former associates in the black American left, coupled with his exclusion from African-American intelligentsia, impacted his decision to embrace an alternative program. During the final years of his radical phase Garvey's ideas, program and relationships were impacted by a collision of the personal and political in his world. Understanding the complexity of Garvey's evolving ideology, and looking at the causes for those changes, are crucial to the study of the movement and its impact.

To my mother, Theresa Gerry, my father, Gary Cravero,
my step-father, Scott Gerry and my brother, Jason Cravero,
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Pan-African nationalism, the concept of international black unity and self-determination, was embraced by a number of black intellectuals in the early twentieth century. The social transformation of African-Americans during the Great Migration, as well as the widespread cynicism resulting from the broken promises of the post-World War I era, laid the basis for Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The war fostered anti-colonial sentiment which inspired a revival in pan-Africanism, and the Bolshevik Revolution led many to believe that socialism and organized labor were the best political options for both blacks and the laboring class. These political options went far beyond those characterized by what Cary D. Wintz refers to as "the militant anti-segregationist/accommodationist self-help dichotomy."¹ The rapidly urbanized New Negroes of the post-war era were faced with a choice as to which approach they believed would be most effective in improving the condition of their race.

African-American intelligentsia developed within the context of white supremacy, leading many African-American intellectuals to believe that they alone were best equipped to deal with black oppression. Many saw Garvey, a Jamaican with a global view of black empowerment, as an outsider pushing his agenda in the face of African-American exceptionalism. Despite the ways they ridiculed and dismissed Garvey, African-American intellectuals were aware of his popularity, many seeing him as a threat to the success of their own efforts. His program was appealing in that it focused on the autonomy of all blacks, not just black Americans or W.E.B. Du Bois's "talented tenth." Garveyism was a crucial factor in the shaping of black American thought from the Jim Crow era through the modern civil rights

¹ Cary D. Wintz, ed., *African American Political Thought 1890-1930: Washington, Du Bois, Garvey, and Randolph* (Armonk & London: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), 10.

movement. Garvey influenced and was influenced by the labor movement, and despite the fact that economic theory was secondary to black autonomy in his philosophy, the class appeal of his propaganda was much stronger than historians have allowed, especially from his early formative years through his radical phase.

The term “left” can be defined in a number of ways depending on context. In one sense, the “left” defines change, whereas the “right” is associated with a return to something. In the context of this study, the term “left” refers to groups and individuals with a commitment to using the power of state to achieve social change, including the labor movement and socialist movement. In the 1910s and 1920s, the term “class” was often times used in reference to race or racialization. Hence, when Garvey employed the term “class,” he could have been referring to race. Although Garvey did not have a Marxist ideology, he nonetheless employed a Marxist analysis, and since a vast majority of black people were working class, it is difficult to separate the terms in that context.

According to historians Tony Martin, Cary D. Wintz, Judith Stein, Mary G. Rolinson, and Colin Grant, Garvey’s collaboration with the left was doomed from the start because his ideas of “race first” conflicted with those who held integrationist values and viewed the struggle in terms of class.² Although these historians suppose that the philosophical and political ideology of Garvey and black leaders on the American left were stubbornly resolute and at odds with one another, the complexity and evolving political thought of Garvey and leftist black leaders challenge their conclusions.

² Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (Westport & London: Greenwood Press, 1976), 316-18; Wintz, xii, 11-14; Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 61-63, 274-75.

The 1920s American left contained two major schools of thought regarding the role of African Americans in the class struggle.³ One faction, including such prominent figures as Morris Hillquit, Victor Berger, William Noyes, John H. Adams, Algie M. Simons, and Sumner W. Rose, held the view that the socialist movement would gain more momentum if black oppression and racism were downplayed. A more progressive school of thought held by figures like William Costley, A. Philip Randolph, Chandler Owen, Hubert H. Harrison, William Mailley, Caroline Hollingsworth Pemberton, Reverend George D. Herron, Theresa Malkiel, and eventually Eugene V. Debs, openly discussed the violence directed toward African Americans and promised to fight to eradicate racism.⁴ Much of the left-wing faction shared Garvey's ideology regarding armed resistance to lynching and racial violence.

Some historians, such as Judith Stein and Ahmed Shawki, argue that "Garvey tried to identify with the possibility of social change that the Bolshevik Revolution represented, without endorsing the communist aims of the revolution."⁵ They claim that Garvey adopted militant rhetoric in 1919 because he understood that it was necessary to attract members to the UNIA. However, his relationship with the American left, especially in the first several years he arrived in the United States, is more complex than these historians allow. Garvey brought with him to the United States a Caribbean sentiment that championed the class struggle, and he maintained a close relationship with the black American left prior to and through his "radical phase." Garvey's propaganda demonstrated a class appeal that supported the international left and the workers' movements throughout this period.

³ Colin Grant, *Negro With A Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 134-5, 139-43.

⁴ Wintz, xii, 11-14.

⁵ Ahmed Shawki, *Black Liberation and Socialism* (Chicago: Haymarkey Books, 2006), 105.

1.1 Thesis

While Garvey worked closely with the black American left through his radical phase, he ultimately distanced himself and his program from them, and he did so for a number of reasons. The labor and socialist movements, along with other white-controlled institutions with which blacks allied for social uplift, discriminated against blacks, leading Garvey to the conclusion that his race must determine its own destiny. His opinion was further solidified when the United States government failed to protect blacks from lynching and violent race riots, and when the delegates sent by the UNIA to the Paris Peace Conference were rejected. The United States Justice Department's campaign to infiltrate his organization and remove Garvey at the height of the Red Scare added to his anxiety and suspicions that his enemies were determined to stop him and caused him to distance his program from the left. Finally, since Garvey was pragmatic, not ideologically driven, and economic theory was secondary in his philosophy, increased criticism from former associates in the black American left, coupled with his exclusion from African-American intelligentsia, impacted his decision to embrace an alternative program.

Observing international imperialistic and capitalistic trends that followed the First World War, Garvey began to espouse the idea that blacks would only achieve freedom of action and opportunity if they embraced these trends and established their own power. Although he was critical of European imperialism and colonialism, Garvey believed that blacks had to embrace their own version if they wanted to compete with global powers. Garvey increasingly viewed the black struggle as racial rather than economic and concluded that reliance on the power of the state was an unlikely avenue for blacks to achieve social justice. However, the class struggle remained a crucial component of Garvey's ideology and propaganda despite the fact that his program and ideology were evolving into something more racial and industrially-focused. When

the United States government finally granted him a visa for re-entry into the country in July 1921, Garvey entered what Robert A. Hill refers to as his “retreat from radicalism” phase, during which he abandoned his revolutionary, militaristic rhetoric and anti-white talk, and became patriotic in his speeches and propaganda. Fresh from a Caribbean fundraising tour, Garvey denounced the black American left, black trade unionism and labor activism. However, it was not the case that he merely succumbed to government pressure and changed his ideology to accommodate his desire to return to the United States. Garvey’s relationship with the black American left began to disintegrate years prior to his return to the United States and his retreat from radicalism, and his ideology would have changed even without government pressure.

1.2 Historiography

Although several historians have addressed Garvey’s affiliation with the black American left there has not yet been a consummate study on the nature of that relationship. I will examine the class appeal of Garvey’s propaganda throughout his program’s formative years to reveal aspects of his political thought that are not entirely represented in the historiography.

Understanding the complexity of Garvey’s evolving ideology, and looking at the causes for those changes, is crucial to the study of the movement and its impact.

The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey was the first attempt at compiling and editing available resources on Garvey, and was assembled by his second wife, Amy Jacques Garvey, from material that had appeared mostly in the *Negro World*, the official organ of the UNIA. The first of the two-volume work was published during Garvey’s mail fraud trial in early 1923 as part of an effort to raise legal defense funds. This explains why none of Garvey’s speeches and writings from his “radical phase,” between 1918 and February 1921, were

included. Yet this “radical phase,” in which Garvey advocated armed black resistance, and employed revolutionary, often anti-white rhetoric, is crucial to understanding the abrupt rise of the movement and the nature of Garvey’s relationship to the black American left. The significance of this work is that it provides a different perspective from the otherwise largely negatively biased available scholarship on Garvey from this period.

Before Robert A. Hill’s *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*⁶ provided the first major comprehensive collection of all available historical documents and materials relating to Garvey and his organizations, sound scholarship on the man and the movement was difficult and incomplete. Prior to 1983, when the first volume was published, much of what historians surmised about Garvey and his movement was based primarily on critical sources, such as federal documents and articles written by his enemies. Contemporary black intellectuals were generally critical and regarded him as something of a con man. In contrast, the surviving editorials from the *Negro World* must be considered positively biased, consistently defending Garvey and never printing anything critical. Hill’s work provides a consummate documentary collection of source material on Garvey, changing the way that historians view the man and the movement.

Even Hill’s collection is incomplete due to a number of variables. The United States District Attorney’s office seized UNIA records in 1922 as evidence in Garvey’s mail fraud trial. Shortly thereafter, part of the UNIA’s and the *Negro World*’s joint archives were destroyed in a fire. Following Garvey’s imprisonment, internal divisions and foreclosures forced the UNIA parent body to change locations, losing additional records along the way. Again, when Garvey

⁶ Robert A. Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers* (10 vols. Projected; Berkeley, 1983-).

moved the headquarters from Jamaica to London, the records left behind were lost due to foreclosures. Whatever records survived to that point were destroyed when the Germans bombed London in 1941 and 1942.⁷

Shortly after Garvey's mail fraud conviction, E. Franklin Frazier analyzed the movement sociologically in an article for *Opportunity* entitled, "The Garvey Movement." In it Garvey appeared charismatic as well as escapist: "He has failed to deal realistically with life as most so-called cranks, but he has initiated a mass movement among Negroes because it appealed to something that is in every crowd-minded man."⁸ Next, Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal published *An American dilemma: The negro problem and modern democracy* in 1944, a study funded by the Carnegie Foundation on race relations in the United States. Ralph Bunche, who served as Myrdal's primary researcher and writer for the project, called Garvey a "swindler" with an "African paradise" scheme that "merely afforded an emotional escape" for the masses.⁹ After Myrdal and Bunche's work, Garvey was ignored rather than condemned, until Edmund David Cronon's full-length monograph appeared eleven years later.

The first major study of Garvey and the UNIA, Edmund David Cronon's *Black Moses*, portrays Garvey as extremely flawed and his movement as utopian. According to Cronon the great mass of urban blacks in the North, uneducated, politically unsophisticated, and ignored by Du Bois's "talented tenth," found leadership in Garvey. Cronon's conclusions about Garvey were mixed.¹⁰ On the one hand he portrays Garvey as an honest man harassed by an American establishment bent on getting rid of a supposedly dangerous radical. He points out the ways

⁷ Ibid, xcii.

⁸ E. Franklin Frazier, "The Garvey Movement," *Opportunity* 4 (November 1926): 348.

⁹ Ibid, 346-48.

¹⁰ Edmund David Cronon, *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1955), 221-22.

Garvey labored to restore racial dignity and pride, and in his commitment to racial self-determination he was “the forerunner of the native nationalism that is sweeping across Africa today.”¹¹ Yet Cronon believes that Garvey’s incompetent organizational leadership “overbalanced the sounder aspects of his program.”¹² According to Cronon, Garvey’s major problem was that his solution to the racial situation was mass emigration to Africa, which was an unrealistic solution in an era when white colonialism resurged. Although Cronon had access to Garvey’s widow, he was at a disadvantage regarding available evidence. Cronon did not have access to a number of files from the UNIA which were recovered in 1970, or the surviving issues of *Negro World*, which have since become easily attainable. His research was largely based on the thousands of pages of testimony and Black Star Line exhibits from Garvey’s mail fraud trial.

Although Cronon attempts to present a balanced account of Garvey and his movement, his study is limited by the misconceptions of previous scholarship and the available primary source material. He maintains the mistaken belief that “Garvey sought to raise high the walls of racial nationalism at a time when most thoughtful men were seeking to tear down these barriers.”¹³ The “thoughtful men” to whom Cronon refers are the black and white American left, who believed that the race problem could be solved within the class struggle. Conversely, according to Cronon, Garvey and the UNIA had fascist properties, with centralized leadership and strict principles of nationalism.¹⁴ As Theodore Vincent would later point out, “Cronon could not visualize a black nationalism which was neither reactionary nor demagogic, and he finally concluded that Garvey’s racial nationalism was the product of ignorance rather than intent.”¹⁵

¹¹ Ibid, 211.

¹² Ibid, 220.

¹³ Ibid, 221.

¹⁴ Ibid, 199.

¹⁵ Theodore Vincent, *Black Power and the Garvey Movement* (Berkeley: Ramparts Press, 1971), 16.

Vincent believes that Cronon's work ignored the UNIA's efforts to fight discrimination, perpetuating the notion that Garvey and his movement's primary goal was a back to Africa movement because it was "an easy way of criticizing the UNIA's separatist program."¹⁶

Theodore Vincent's 1971 study of the link between Garveyism and later black separatist movements examines many aspects of the movement and addresses the diversity among its members. His work is crucial to the historiography because it is the first to acknowledge the appeal of Garvey to blacks in the 1920s and his long-lasting influence in black thought.¹⁷

Vincent's work also opens the door to the study of the internal divisions within the Garvey movement. A strength of the work is Vincent's consideration of Garvey's black opponents outside the UNIA as an additional factor that weakened the organization. Vincent argues that "the Garvey of 1914 lacked the political finesse of the Garvey of 1920," as the war years were a "vital period of ideological experimentation" in which an "unusual camaraderie" developed between "militants of nationalist and socialist persuasion," and that black militants often shared the pages of their publications, speaking platforms and ideas with one another.¹⁸ Vincent also points out that although Garvey's contribution became more relevant and many of his former critics adopted a more favorable position toward him, these early criticism retained a prevailing position in the historical understanding of Garvey and his movement.¹⁹

According to Vincent, Garvey's positions have been greatly misunderstood by previous historians, namely Cronon. Vincent attests that Garvey's "opposition to organized socialist groups was based primarily on a dislike for their integrationist views and the socialist concept of

¹⁶ Cronon, 222; Vincent, 15-16.

¹⁷ Vincent, 20.

¹⁸ Ibid, 41.

¹⁹ Ibid, 9-10.

black and white political alliance.”²⁰ Vincent points out that although Garvey endorsed capitalism under certain conditions, he “was adamantly opposed to the economic imperialism of whites in (what is now considered) the Third World and to the exploitation of blacks by American black capitalists,” and was far from the “economic reactionary” that his critics in the black American left made him out to be.²¹ One of the most significant aspects of this study is that it demonstrates that despite his emphasis on cultural nationalism, Garvey’s approach to economic questions were eclectic and complex, such as speaking out against colonialism and exploitative black capitalists.²² As Vincent demonstrates, “Garvey separated the national liberation struggle from a narrow economic context” in an age in which the debate over socialism versus capitalism was a polarizing issue that “angered the dogmatists on all sides.”²³

Vincent attests that “Garvey’s first concern was the building of a nation, and anyone who stood in the way of his struggle was to be opposed,” regardless of their economic theory.²⁴ Although, he claims, Garvey “refrained from endorsing either major economic system,” Vincent concludes that “if any economic label fits Garvey, it would be ‘welfare-state liberal,’” citing his People’s Political Party platform for Jamaica, drawn up in 1929, which states that “the government of a black nation should guarantee the workers social security, steady employment, and compensation in case of injury, and that it should have the right to appropriate private lands for public use.”²⁵ Vincent describes the UNIA Negro Factories Corporation and the Black Star Line as “more cooperatives than corporations,” and points out that “the proposed colony in

²⁰ Ibid, 24.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Vincent, 25.

²⁵ Ibid.

Liberia was to consist of family-unit farms along with five thousand-acre cooperative farms run by the Association.”²⁶

Vincent is correct that economic theory was secondary in Garvey’s philosophy, yet his conclusion that Garvey’s opposition to organized socialist and leftist groups was based primarily on a dislike for their integrationist views and the socialist concept of black and white political alliance is not entirely accurate. While Vincent addresses the inaccuracy of the historiography regarding Garvey’s relationship to the black American left, he neglects to acknowledge the extent of the class appeal of Garvey’s propaganda and mistakenly surmises that Garvey’s opposition to black leftists was due to his refusal to include racial cooperation in his program. Vincent also fails to address the traits of Garvey’s personality that affected his relationship with critics and dissenters. Garvey’s vindictiveness and his suspicion that his enemies were out to get him only increased as the United States government waged a campaign to monitor and deport him. Concerned largely with those radical organizations they deemed socialist or leftist, the United States government believed Garvey and his movements were tied to Bolshevism, socialism and leftist organizations.

Three years after Vincent’s study, John Henrik Clarke compiled a collection of essays on the movement that provided historical context for the intersection between Garvey and various parts of the black world in which his movement thrived.²⁷ An important connection involves Garvey’s economic and emigrationist policies and those of Booker T. Washington. Clarke compiled the book with the assistance of Amy Jacques Garvey, who gave him access to extensive files and two taped interviews, and Robert Hill, who would later compile the most

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ John Henrik Clarke, *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* (New York: Random House, 1974).

comprehensive collection of all available historical records and manuscripts involving Garvey. Both Robert Hill and Amy Jacques Garvey contributed essays to the collection.

Tony Martin's *Race First* was the most meticulously researched narrative on Garvey and the UNIA at the time of publication, covering significant issues that Garvey faced regarding his rivals and the U.S. government. The strength of Martin's work is in the access he had to materials previously unavailable.²⁸ Martin is uncritical of Garvey, ignoring most negative aspects of his life and personality. Although he does not address internal organizational struggles, as the title of the book suggests he would, Martin devotes extensive attention to Garvey's black opponents outside the UNIA. Although it has the fullest account to that point of the relationship between the UNIA and the Communist party, it is hagiographic in its treatment of Garvey. Like Vincent, Martin sees Garvey as uniquely relevant and misunderstood, while Cronon sees Garvey as unique, yet irrelevant.

Vincent and Martin agree that Garvey's "race first" ideology appeared to white leftists and theorists of class struggle to be contradictory and hypocritical, since they could not fathom the significance of black power.²⁹ Because of this, Garvey could not see the advantage of blacks working within American and European leftist programs: "Fundamentally, what racial difference is there between a white Communist, Republican or Democrat?"³⁰ Garvey's refusal to work with the black American left was largely due to the state of leftist institutions in the United States, where most were directed by whites, leading to internal racial inequality. Vincent points out that Garvey supported and worked with indigenous black-led socialist movement struggles in areas

²⁸ Martin, 375-7.

²⁹ Vincent, 27.

³⁰ Marcus Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*, vol. 2, 69.

considered today to be the Third World.³¹ While Vincent is correct, his analysis does not address Garvey's support and association with American socialists and leftists, suggesting that Garvey's relationship with these groups only extended to African nations.

In her 1986 study, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society*, Judith Stein sees economic forces in modern society as catalysts for the UNIA's programs of economic independence, especially the incorporation and stock sales of the Black Star Line. She focuses on the context of industrialization and radical politicization, and views the popularity of the UNIA as part of the emergence of a black petite bourgeoisie primarily interested in economic opportunity in the modern capitalist context.³² Stein supports Martin's and Vincent's conclusions that "Garvey addressed and attempted to solve the economic, political, and cultural problems of black life." Stein attests that "Garveyism was not an escape to a psychological or real Africa. Underlying the UNIA's politics was a profound social upheaval that affected all parts of the black world" and cannot be reduced to racism.³³

In her 2007 book, *Grassroots Garveyism: The UNIA in the Rural South, 1920-1927*, Mary Rolinson attests that Garveyism provided a common bond during the upheaval of the Great Migration, and continues to flourish in other forms of black protest.³⁴ She argues that Washington's goals of black economic independence and social separation still held wide appeal, especially in the South, while Du Bois, the NAACP, and the black socialists were more inclined toward cooperative efforts between the races. Before Rolinson's book, much of the historiography on Garveyism's impact focused on Garvey himself, and the existing scholarship

³¹ Vincent, 28-29.

³² Stein, *World of Marcus Garvey*.

³³ Ibid, 3-4.

³⁴ Mary Rolinson, *Grassroots Garveyism: The UNIA in the Rural American South, 1920-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007): 24-5.

that attempted to examine the ideology of Garveyites was mostly limited to the urban North. Rolinson's work attempts to change both of these conceptions, contributing an important work to the historiography. Rolinson questions historians' understandings of Garveyism "as both short-lived and unique" by examining the movement through the viewpoint of Southern Garveyites, and lengthening the span of the movement by examining tenets of Garveyism rooted in black political thought that preceded the movement as well as its continued influence long after Garvey's deportation.

Rolinson demonstrates that Garveyites had adopted black political ideologies that preceded Garvey and that even after the UNIA had disappeared in the South in the 1930s, those ideologies continued to flourish for generations. This work is critical to the historiography of the class appeal of Garvey's propaganda in that it is the first to examine a large group of his followers who had previously gone unnoticed.

Although Garvey's most sustained activity in the labor movement came during his Jamaican period of 1927-1935, most of the source material in this study will encompass the period from Garvey's early years in Jamaica through the First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World of 1920, which ended the formative years of the Garvey movement. Since many have examined Garvey's "retreat from radicalism," which began around the time he was granted re-entry into the United States in 1921, and in which Garvey abandoned his militant rhetoric, this study will examine the class appeal of Garvey's propaganda through his radical period. Understanding the complexity of Garvey's evolving ideology, and looking at the causes for those changes, are crucial to the study of the movement and its impact.

Chapter 2 covers several crucial components of Garvey's philosophy that he implemented from previous and contemporary black intellectual thought and examines his

formative experiences that shaped his thought and decisions. Beginning with his childhood and concluding with his first year in the United States, this chapter examines evidence of the class appeal of Garvey's propaganda that existed before his "radical phase," in which he was sympathetic with the black American left. Chapter 3 covers a critical period of growth in the Garvey movement. Between the entry of the United States into the First World War, a year after Garvey's arrival in the United States, and when the UNIA's representatives arrived at the peace conference in Paris on March 1, 1919, Garvey and his program's message of African redemption evolved with the troubled state of the African American community. Garvey began his "radical phase" during this period, which lasted from 1918-1921 and in which he was vastly sympathetic with the black American left and the labor movement. I will examine primary sources from Garvey and his contemporaries that demonstrate the evolving nature of his relationship with the left.

The final chapter begins with UNIA's representatives arriving at the Paris Peace Conference in March 1919 and concludes with the First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in August 1920. This chapter demonstrates that the class appeal of Garvey's propaganda remained a major component throughout the convention, even as Garvey's program was evolving into something more racially motivated.

Garvey's Timeline in the U.S.³⁵

1916

- March 24 Garvey arrives in the United States.
- May 9 Garvey delivers his first public speech.
- May – June Garvey begins his yearlong lecture tour across the country.

1917

- May Garvey organizes the New York branch of the UNIA.
- July 2 Race riots in East St. Louis.
- October First split in the UNIA's New York branch.
- November 6 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia

1918

- January 9-13 Second split in the UNIA's New York branch.
- June 3 The Bureau of Investigation receives first report on Garvey's activities.
- August 17 The *Negro World* begins publication.

1919

- March 1 UNIA's delegates arrive at Paris Peace Conference.
- April 27 Garvey announces plans for the Black Star Line (BSL).
- June 16 New York Assistant District Attorney questions Garvey about finances.
- July 12 Bureau of Investigation instructs New York division to forward all

³⁵ Hill, 1:xlix-lv.; Hill, 2:cix-cxvii.

information on Garvey and to closely observe his activities.

- July 20-21 Race riots in Washington, D.C.
- July 27-31 Race riots in Chicago.
- July 28 New York Assistant District Attorney questions Garvey about finances again.
- July W.A. Domingo resigns as editor of the *Negro World*.
- August 4 New York Assistant District Attorney swears out a warrant for Garvey's arrest on libel charges.
- August 5 Garvey is questioned about his relationships with the IWW, socialists and anarchists.
- August 15 Bureau of Investigation instructs New York division to prepare a case for deportation of Garvey.
- August 29 Garvey is briefly detained in Tombs prison and indicted on three charges of criminal libel.
- September 16 New York Assistant District Attorney further questions Garvey.
- October 14 Garvey is wounded in assassination attempt.
- October 19 Garvey gives first speech after assassination attempt.
- 1920**
- April 9 Garvey's father dies in Jamaican almshouse.
- June 10 Garvey's first wife claims abandonment six months after being married.
- August UNIA's First International Convention of Negro People of the World.

CHAPTER 2: THE ROOTS OF GARVEYISM AND HIS FORMATIVE YEARS

Although Marcus Garvey achieved more success than his predecessors in promoting his ideology to the international black masses, few of his program's principles were original. Traditions of black nationalism, pan-Africanism, black protest and self-help date back to the nineteenth century.³⁶ In *Grassroots Garveyism*, Mary Rolinson demonstrates that Garveyism was part of a larger tradition of black intellectual thought, not separate from it, as much of the historiography suggests. For the purposes of this study several key concepts that Garvey adopted from earlier and contemporary thought will be highlighted. Along with these concepts this chapter examines Garvey's home life and early experiences in order to highlight the influences that shaped his intellectual thought through his first year in the United States.

2.1 Printer's Apprentice

According to his childhood friend, Isaac Rose, Garvey had an acute interest in world affairs at an early age. Rose claimed that Garvey always seemed to carry books and frequently discussed what he had been reading.³⁷ In 1901, while still in primary school, Garvey became apprenticed to his godfather, Alfred E. 'Cap' Burrowes, a local printer, eventually dropping out of school at the age of fourteen and relocating when Burrowes set up another printshop in the nearby town of Port Maria in 1904.³⁸ After years of inspiration from the books in the printshop, as well as a recommendation from his godfather, Garvey traveled to Kingston, where he found

³⁶ August Meier, "The Emergence of Negro Nationalism: A Study in Ideologies," in *Along Color Line: Explorations in the Black Experience* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976); John Henrik Clarke, *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* (New York: Random House, 1974).

³⁷ *Jamaica Journal* (Quarterly Institute of Jamaica) Vol. 20, No. 3, August-October 1987, 73-77; Grant, 14.

³⁸ Grant, 13-16.

work at the printing division of P.A. Benjamin Manufacturing Co. in 1906.³⁹ The following year, in 1907, Garvey was elected vice-president of the compositors' branch of the Kingston Typographical Union, organized as affiliate (no. 98) of the International Typographical Union of the American Federation of Labor.⁴⁰ The AFL gave Garvey experience with organized labor and knowledge of the working class struggle.

Garvey quickly advanced through the lower rungs of management and attained the position of foreman, which had previously been reserved for Englishmen. Yet, according to biographer, Colin Grant, "in this climate of every man for himself...Garvey's loyalties wavered between self-advancement and communal justice."⁴¹ Garvey retained his trade-union membership throughout his promotions, indicating that he maintained a connection with organized labor throughout his future career.⁴²

2.2 Printers Strike

When managers in Kingston would not meet print workers' demands for better working conditions and fairer wages, the Kingston Typographical Union organized a strike across the entire island on November 28, 1908. Although Garvey had worked his way up to vice-president of the compositor's branch of the union he nonetheless joined the workers in striking, and according to some historians he took on a leading position. It should be noted that Cronon's claim that Garvey was a strike leader was repudiated by one of the founders of the union, A.J.

³⁹ Amy Jacques Garvey, *Garvey and Garveyism*, 3-7; Marcus Garvey, "A Journey of Self-Discovery," in Clarke, ed., *Marcus Garvey and the Vision of Africa* (New York, 1974): 71-73; Grant 16-17.

⁴⁰ Hill, 1:cx.

⁴¹ Grant, 18.

⁴² Ibid.

McGlashan.⁴³ The strike lasted four weeks until January 1909, when the Kingston Typographical Union collapsed and its executive members were dismissed.⁴⁴

Despite the vindictive nature of Jamaican management and his position of leadership, Garvey stood by the working class strikers, later admitting that he did so instinctively.⁴⁵ Making instinctive decisions is indicative of the personal opportunism that Garvey demonstrated throughout his life. Garvey's career would not suffer by his decision to side with the union, as he was hired in the government's printing office shortly after the strike.⁴⁶

2.3 Garvey's Watchmen

Shortly after the print workers' strike Garvey produced his first newspaper, *Garvey's Watchmen*, in 1909. Although none of the three published issues have been recovered Garvey later claimed a circulation of 3,000; what Colin Grant calls "an unlikely figure given the population of the city and the fact that Garvey had limited funds for promotion."⁴⁷ Garvey likely suspended publication after the third issue in part due to the recession Jamaica experienced at this time. In his first attempt at publishing his own journal Garvey addressed themes predominantly associated with the working class struggle, including mounting a campaign to address the lack of relief for the poor and the indifference of Jamaican authorities to poverty.⁴⁸ Running his own paper gave him the confidence and experience he would later apply to his American newspaper, the *Negro World*. Publishing also enabled Garvey to become part of the National Club, Jamaica's first nationalist political organization.

⁴³ Richard Hart, "The Life and Resurrection of Marcus Garvey," *Race* 9:2 (1967): 219-20, in Stein, 25.

⁴⁴ Hill, 1:36, n.4.

⁴⁵ Hill, 1:35; Grant, 19.

⁴⁶ Amy Jacques Garvey, *Garvey and Garveyism*, 7; Stein, 25.

⁴⁷ Grant, 23-24; Hill, 1:36, n.6.

⁴⁸ Grant, 23-24; Amy Jacques Garvey, *Garvey and Garveyism*, 7.

2.4 National Club

Garvey was drawn to the intellectual and political life of Kingston and in 1909 he became involved in the National Club. Organized by lawyer and legislator Solomon Alexander Cox, the club fought against privilege and British colonial control over the island. On April 20, 1910, Garvey was elected first assistant secretary of the club, and Wilfred Domingo, a socialist and the future first editor of Garvey's newspaper in the United States, was elected second assistant secretary.⁴⁹

Two of the National Club's major objectives were the removal of Governor Sir Sydney H. Olivier and an end to the influx of indentured Indian labor, known locally as "coolie" immigration.⁵⁰ A rise in unemployment was attributed to this rise in immigration and Cox blamed large companies like the American-owned United Fruit Company for bringing in these laborers.⁵¹ However, the legislative council was more concerned with planters than laborers, and Cox was unseated.⁵² Garvey's outrage was mentioned in the *Jamaica Times*: "Mr. Marcus Garvey has issued a pamphlet in which he upholds the policy of Mr. Cox and deals severely with the Press which he declares is now the enemy of the people."⁵³ The title of the pamphlet, "The Struggling Mass," identifies Garvey's concern with class oppression while it ignores the "black versus brown" struggle indicative of the Jamaican labor culture.

⁴⁹ Grant, 20-21.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 21.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Hill, 1:21; Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid; Marcus Garvey, "The Struggling Mass," *Jamaican Times Supplement*, Saturday, May 28, 1910.

According to Hill, this pamphlet has not been found. Garvey may not have been its sole author. W.A. Domingo, who was a fellow member of the National Club, later recalled the appearance of "a pamphlet which, in a sense, we both wrote in Kingston and he [Garvey] published" (Fisk University, Nashville, Amy Jacques Garvey Papers, W.A. Domingo to Amy Jacques Garvey, January 15, 1961), in Hill, 1:22-23.

2.5 Joseph Robert Love

Some of Garvey's activities addressed race in less obvious ways. In order to lose his Jamaican country accent and adopt "neutral Standard English spoken in music-appreciation and debating societies" Garvey hired Joseph Robert Love, a renowned black orator, to give him elocution lessons.⁵⁴ Love was a radical journalist and an aggressive advocate for social reform. According to Garvey biographer Colin Grant, Love "found disciples radicalized and racialized by the sermons in his weekly journal," the *Jamaica Advocate*, in young men like Garvey and Domingo.⁵⁵ For example, he campaigned for a memorial to William Gordon, a black preacher executed for his part in the Morant Bay uprising forty years prior. Such activities concerned authorities.⁵⁶

Love's paper highlighted the injustices of Caribbean society, advocated pan-African ideals, and had themes of racial pride and self-sufficiency. It is clear that Garvey admired Love and considered him a mentor despite limited evidence of their correspondences.⁵⁷ The *Jamaica Advocate*, which Love described as the "literature of political and social freedom," became the official publication of the Jamaica Union of Teachers.⁵⁸ Garvey later wrote that "one cannot read [Love's] 'Jamaica Advocate' without getting race consciousness."⁵⁹ Mary Rolinson points out that these themes had importance to future Garveyites because of their link as a foundation for community advancement among black people.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Grant, 21-22.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 22.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Interview with Lumsden, November 21, 2003 (telephone), Colin Grant; Lumsden, *Robert Love and Jamaican Politics* (Kingston, Jamaica: Dissertation, University of the West Indies, 1987), 1-10, in Grant, 22.

⁵⁸ "Joseph Robert Love," *Gleaner*, February 17, 1930, quoted in Hill, 1:533-35.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Rolinson, 30.

2.6 Travel to Central America

Garvey often found refuge from his troubled home life in the company of his uncles, Henry and Joseph Richards, the latter of whom had a 50-acre farm where Marcus worked.⁶¹ Garvey admired the hardworking benevolent Christian ethic of his uncles and attributed his early education to his Uncle Joseph. His artisan father had not been a supporter of the working class. Yet when his Uncle Henry found him work as a timekeeper on a United Fruit Company banana plantation in Costa Rica in the autumn of 1910, Garvey spent his savings on a steamship ticket to Costa Rica.

His experiences in Central America furthered his identification with working class issues. He arrived in Costa Rica in the middle of a battle between Jamaican laborers and their North American managers, which exploded into angry demonstrations and the firing of six hundred union members as an example to others.⁶² In 1911, Garvey began editing a bilingual newspaper, *La Nacion*. He first made waves when he made unsubstantiated comments about a fire that had destroyed several West Indian-owned small businesses in the center of Limon, questioning why the fire brigade had saved the luxurious home of a wealthy white Jamaican, yet claimed there was not enough water to save the small businesses.⁶³ Pointing out the class bias of the fire brigade's priorities upset the local government and the police responded with a rough handling of Garvey.⁶⁴ According to Tony Martin, Garvey was later arrested for urging workers to fight for better conditions, and was eventually either expelled from the country or left to escape

⁶¹ Grant, 11.
⁶² Ibid, 26-27.
⁶³ Ibid, 30-31.
⁶⁴ Ibid.

authorities.⁶⁵ The bullying and belittling of laborers sickened Garvey and heightened his sense of identification with the working class.⁶⁶

Garvey spent the next few months traveling through Panama, Honduras, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela, where he witnessed the widespread degradation of blacks, financed his travels by working odd jobs, started his second newspaper in Colon, Panama, and began speaking to black laborers.⁶⁷ The countless hours spent pouring through his father's vast library, coupled with his time working as a printer for his godfather, allowed young Marcus to express his views through writing and speaking, and he began to hone those skills throughout his time in Central America.

Garvey's time in Panama was crucial to his Central American experience. The Panama Canal was still three years from completion and the region was "an explosive crucible of ambitious men, dangerous materials, promissory notes of wealth and blatant exploitation."⁶⁸ In order to be eligible for a "Yankee dollar," Caribbean workers entered into a Mephistophelean pact, in which "USA contractors implemented 'Jim Crow' standards of segregation and introduced a two-tier system of payment" benefiting white workers.⁶⁹ The institutionalized discrimination that he experienced firsthand was difficult for Garvey to accept and he returned to Jamaica at the end of 1911.⁷⁰ The island was experiencing poor economic conditions at the time of Garvey's return and he soon began making preparations for travel to England.

⁶⁵ Martin, 4.

⁶⁶ Amy Jacques Garvey, *Garvey and Garveyism*, 6.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 7; Martin, 5; Grant, 31.

⁶⁸ Grant, 31.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 32.

⁷⁰ Amy Jacques Garvey, *Garvey and Garveyism*, 7; Grant, 31-32.

Garvey's experience in Central America was crucial in shaping his intellectual thought. Witnessing firsthand the exploitation of the working class gave Garvey a sense of purpose and speaking and writing about his developing ideas gave him the confidence and skills he would use to shape his movement. According to Vincent, these experiences also influenced Garvey's later emphasis on an international solution to race problems.⁷¹ Although he came from humble origins, Garvey began seeking an international stage that included the Caribbean, Central America, the United States, England and Africa, hoping to align his thinking with both intellectuals and the working class. As he structured his ideology, Garvey increasingly found himself at the intersection of the race and class struggle.

2.7 Travel to London

Garvey's first journey to England was perhaps the most significant experience regarding the shaping of his political ideas and the development of his career. Garvey was impressed with the British system of democracy and drew comparisons to their Caribbean colonies, pointing out the hypocrisy of the autocratic system implemented there. While in England he took courses at Birkbeck College, a college for working class youth, and observed the Commonwealth minorities of London.⁷² Absorbing British politics by spending hours in the visitor's gallery of the House of Commons and watching the speeches in Hyde Park, Garvey enhanced his knowledge of the philosophy of pan-Africanism.⁷³

Garvey became familiar with leading black figures, many of whom would soon become associates, including Booker T. Washington, Edward Wilmot Blyden, John Edward Bruce,

⁷¹ Vincent, 93.

⁷² Stein, 29.

⁷³ Wintz, 10; Stein, 28-29.

W.E.B. Du Bois, and William Ferris, by reading articles by and about them in the *Africa Times and Orient Review*, a journal with a Pan-African outlook that covered Middle and Far Eastern nationalist struggles.⁷⁴ One of his greatest influences at this time, Duse Mohammed Ali, an Egyptian nationalist and journalist who launched the journal, worked to expose conditions in colonial Africa and compared them to the conditions of blacks internationally. Through Ali Garvey began looking at the struggle of his race through a pan-African context to a greater extent than he had previously.

2.8 Duse Mohammed Ali

Garvey worked as a messenger at the offices of the *African Times and Orient Review* and later published an essay on the West Indies in the October 1913 issue.⁷⁵ Ali, who facilitated many of the prewar relationships among British humanitarians, black students, and African and European businessmen, ensured that articles in the journal were contributed by Africans, African-Americans, whites, Indians, Chinese, and Arabs.⁷⁶ This eclectic group of journalists reported on major black international achievements, highlighted British colonial abuse and promoted African businesses.⁷⁷ The impressionable Garvey became familiar with American race intellectuals through Ali, absorbing his Pan-African context, and adopting many of these themes several years later in his own journal, the *Negro World*. His perspective might have been different had he first encountered someone like W.E.B. DuBois through the *Chicago Defender*.

⁷⁴ Martin, 6.

⁷⁵ Marcus Garvey, "The British West Indies in the Mirror of Civilization," in Clarke, ed., *Garvey and the Vision of Africa*, 77-82; John Bruce to Major Loving, January 13, 1919, file 10218-261/39, and I. Newby to Lieutenant Colonel H.A. Pakenham, November 22, 1918, file 10218-261/36, Military Intelligence Division, in Record Group 165, Records of the Department of War, National Archives., in Hill, 1:348-51.

⁷⁶ Ibid; Stein, 29.

⁷⁷ Imanuel Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement* (London, 1974), 223, in Stein, 29.

According to Vincent, Ali expounded a new type of humanist philosophy in his journal. While advocating for colonized people to work for social justice independently of whites, Ali and his journal also claimed to be dedicated to the awakening of that “touch of nature which makes the whole world kin...that bond of universal brotherhood between White, Yellow, Brown and Black.”⁷⁸ He claimed that white misconceptions of blacks and Asians had produced “non-appreciation, and non-appreciation has unleashed the hydra-headed monster of derision, contempt and repression.”⁷⁹

Although Ali often praised the American socialist weekly *Appeal to Reason* because it dared to “seek to destroy the profit system” and “because it stands for what the people believe is right,” he was neither a social activist nor a radical in his economic views.⁸⁰ Similar to the platform Garvey would eventually adopt, Ali’s solution to the economic problems of oppressed working class ethnic groups centered on building their own businesses, and his journal regularly printed stories of new business ventures started by black men across the world.⁸¹ Garvey’s time in England allowed him to expand his understanding of the international condition of black people, and through Ali he began to relate the conditions of colonial Africa to those of blacks internationally.

2.9 Edward Blyden

While reading in London Garvey became particularly influenced by the writings of Edward Blyden and Booker T. Washington. Much of Garvey’s intellectual thought and

⁷⁸ *African Times and Orient Review*, July 1921, in Vincent, 94.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *African Times and Orient Review*, October 1913, in Vincent, 95-96.

⁸¹ *African Times and Orient Review*, May 1920; Vincent, 95-96.

philosophies are rooted in those of Blyden and Henry McNeal Turner, who will be discussed in this chapter, although he credited more ideological influence to the better-known and contemporary Washington.⁸² An early proponent of black nationalism, Blyden frequently spoke of the black man's natural attachment to Africa, calling upon blacks to bring their knowledge and skills to Liberia. In his book, *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race* (London: W.B. Whittingham, 1887), Blyden proclaimed that blacks could never be free except in Africa and urged Western blacks to emigrate. He predicted that "as the Negro masses [became] educated they would grow impatient with their circumscribed lives, and must then feel 'an irrepressible desire to return to the Fatherland.'"⁸³

According to Tony Martin, Garvey could be considered the last of the great nineteenth century pan-Africanists despite the fact that his movement occurred in the twentieth century.⁸⁴ He bases his assertion on an analysis of Garvey's phraseology, frequent references to Ethiopia "stretching forth her hands to God," his ideas of African nationality and the redemption of Africa, namely his interest in emigration to Liberia, his slogan "Africa for the Africans," and his desire to own and operate his own businesses.⁸⁵ All of these were staples in the writings and speeches of Blyden and Turner.

Garvey's nationalism and desire to end racial discrimination through the creation of programs of self-improvement were not original ideas, nor did they lead him to oppose the major imperialist powers. His experience with London civilization, which he considered superior,

⁸² Rolinson, 28.

⁸³ Hollis Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden: Pan-Negro Patriot, 1832-1912* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 144-116, quoted in Rolinson, 27.

⁸⁴ Martin, 111.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

directly inspired his program of uplift.⁸⁶ The first statement of UNIA goals in August 1914 included strengthening the imperialism of independent African states.⁸⁷ Garvey claimed that blacks “must get the co-operation and sympathy of our white brothers” so that they could use the “colonial project” as a way to establish self-sufficient black nations.⁸⁸ Garvey came to the conclusion that Blyden and the new nationalists’ program of uplift was a better direction than racial conflict and that soliciting support from whites was crucial.⁸⁹ Garvey’s newfound support for imperialism and colonialism is a clear transformation in thought from the view he held as a member of the National Club, which fought against privilege and British colonial control over the island.

The connections between the two themes of pan-Africanism and socialism had been made by other black intellectuals some years before W.E.B. Du Bois. In 1908, Blyden had anticipated an independent Africa economic system in which “all work for each, and each works for all.”⁹⁰ Blyden’s link to socialist ideas is an important component of Garvey’s developing ideology.

2.10 Bishop Henry McNeal Turner

Henry McNeal Turner served with Edward Wilmot Blyden as agents to the American Colonization Society.⁹¹ While Turner’s advocacy of black emigration to Africa made him a

⁸⁶ Stein, 31.

⁸⁷ Marcus Garvey, *A Talk With Afro-West Indians: The Negro Race and Its Problems* (Kingston, Jamaica: July-August, 1914), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Booker T. Washington Papers, *DLC*, in Hill, 1:55-64.

⁸⁸ Marcus Garvey, “Universal Negro Improvement Association: Address Delivered by the President at the Annual Meeting,” *Kingston Daily Chronicle* (August 26, 1915), in Hill, 1:132-36.

⁸⁹ Stein, 32.

⁹⁰ P. Olanwuche Esedebe, *Pan-Africanism: The Idea and Movement, 1776-1963* (Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1982), 61.

⁹¹ Hollis Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden: Pan-Negro Patriot, 1832-1912* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 114-116.

controversial figure, he was regarded as the person mostly responsible for African Methodist Episcopal membership growth. One of Turner's fellow AME bishops, Reverdy Ransom, claimed "it was impossible that the world would ever witness someone like Turner again, because what he did – transforming an impoverished, scattered people into a disciplined organization wielding great collective power – only needed to be done once. Succeeding generations of African-American ministers and politicians faced the different task of refining the organization that Turner established."⁹² According to Mary G. Rolinson, Garvey refined Turner's program by borrowing heavily from his ideology, adapting to twentieth-century conditions and appealing to the same constituency.⁹³ Both men advocated armed defense against lynching, launched personal attacks on rivals and enemies, and shared similar rhetorical styles.⁹⁴ In an editorial debate with Frederick Douglass and northern AME bishop Benjamin Tanner in the *Christian Recorder*, an AME publication and the oldest black periodical in the United States, Turner proposed strategies that mirrored several of Garvey's future plans, arguing that "only a strong and independent African nation ruled by blacks could achieve self-respect for the race."⁹⁵

2.11 Booker T. Washington

While studying at the British Museum Garvey first encountered Booker T. Washington's autobiography, *Up From Slavery*. He would later write of the experience that after reading the book that his "doom" of being a race leader "dawned on him."⁹⁶ Although Garvey would soon denounce Washington's conservatism, at the time the book "symbolized the aspirations of the

⁹² Stephen Ward Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner*, 3-4, quoted in Rolinson, 29.

⁹³ Rolinson, 29.

⁹⁴ Rolinson, 30.

⁹⁵ Angell, 264-265, Rolinson 34.

⁹⁶ *Garvey Papers*, I, p. 5; Grant, 49.

race” to him.⁹⁷ The fact that Blyden and Ali, two of his greatest influences, supported Washington led Garvey to embrace many of Washington’s values, namely pan-Africanism and self-help.

Washington shared Blyden’s position that blacks should use the values and model of the modern nation-state to uplift the race. He solicited donations from whites in order to establish black institutions such as the Tuskegee Institute and the National Negro Business League.⁹⁸ Washington hoped to create black captains of industry by training a race of laborers. He also wanted to provide blacks with adequate educational facilities and protection from racial violence, and suggested that African American labor remain in the South only if those terms were met.⁹⁹

Washington believed that once blacks accumulated wealth and controlled their own business affairs the ability to vote and to access public facilities would soon follow.¹⁰⁰ Garvey adopted the self-help philosophy of Washington and like Washington he understood that soliciting white elites was as necessary as organizing the black masses to accomplish this.¹⁰¹

2.12 Return to Jamaica and the Universal Negro Improvement Association

Garvey returned to Jamaica on July 15, 1914, intent on founding a racial movement. In order to raise revenue he tried selling greeting and condolence cards and “monumental tombstones.”¹⁰² Five days after arriving home he formed the Universal Negro Improvement and

⁹⁷ Vincent, 98.

⁹⁸ Louis Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1865-1901* (New York, 1972), 274, in Stein, 16.

⁹⁹ Booker T. Washington, “The Negro and the Labor Problem of the South,” *Atlanta Constitution*, November 27, 1904, in Wintz, 53-58.

¹⁰⁰ Stein, 16-17.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 31-32.

¹⁰² Amy Ashwood Garvey, “Marcus Garvey: Prophet of Black Nationalism,” nd., *Amy Ashwood Garvey Papers*, London, 54, 64.

Conservation Association and African Communities (Imperial) League. As he explained, his motivation and commitment had emerged from a decade of study:

For the last ten years I have given my time to the study of the condition of the Negro, here, there, and everywhere and I have come to realize that he is still the object of degradation and pity the world over, in the sense that he has no status socially, nationally, or commercially (with a modicum of exception in the United States of America)...¹⁰³

As Vincent points out, although the UNIA issued a general manifesto of purposes it did not have a defined program and developed its strategies gradually through trial and error.¹⁰⁴ Among the objectives of the association were such class conscious themes as caring for the needy of the race, developing schools and colleges for black youth, a pan-African commitment to establishing a universal confraternity among the race, establishing agencies around the world to protect the rights of all Negroes, conducting worldwide commercial and industrial intercourse, and a pledge “to work for better conditions among Negroes everywhere.”¹⁰⁵ Garvey’s desire to establish international racial institutions came from his London experiences.

The UNIA was lobbying the Jamaican Federation of Labor for support within in its first two years.¹⁰⁶ Although Garvey’s organization stressed black self-improvement independent of white assistance, Garvey also hoped that whites would cooperate, suggesting blacks should “move together for the one common good, so that those who have been our friends and

¹⁰³ Marcus Garvey, *A Talk With Afro-West Indians: The Negro Race and Its Problems* (Kingston, Jamaica: July-August, 1914), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Booker T. Washington Papers, *DLC*, in Hill, 1:55-64.

¹⁰⁴ Vincent, 98.

¹⁰⁵ Marcus Garvey, “A Talk With Afro-West Indians,” Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Booker T. Washington Papers, *DLC*, Printed and published by the African Communities League, n.d., Manuscript corrections in Garvey’s hand, in Hill, 1:55-64.

¹⁰⁶ J.G. Monaghan to Marcus Garvey, Kingston, May 14, 1915, in Hill, 1:121; Vincent, 98.

protectors in the past might see the good that there is in us.”¹⁰⁷ Hence, Garvey’s program of black self-improvement also endorsed racial cooperation with whites.

2.13 Jamaican Tuskegee

Garvey was not part of the one percent of black Jamaicans to receive secondary education on the island. Jamaicans had to travel abroad to institutions such as Tuskegee or universities for secondary education and career training.¹⁰⁸ Garvey himself traveled to London for his education. Hence, he saw the opportunity to create a Tuskegee-like institution in Jamaica. Garvey wrote to Washington several times after founding the UNIA and ACL, explaining his work and asking for assistance, sending copies of *Negro World* and requesting reciprocation of any Tuskegee publications:

I have been keeping in touch with your good work in America, and although there is a difference of opinion on the lines on which the Negro should develop himself, yet the fair minded critic cannot fail in admiring your noble efforts. The two schools of America have gone as far as to give us, who are outside the real possibilities of the industrial and intellectual scope for Negro energy. We are organized out here on broad lines and we find it conducive to our interest to pave out way both industrially and intellectually.¹⁰⁹

The two black American intellectual schools of thought that Garvey is referencing are Washington’s program of self-help and industrial education and W.E.B. Du Bois’s “Talented Tenth,” which championed liberal humanistic education.¹¹⁰

Garvey clearly based his program on many of Washington’s strategies and ideology: setting up local UNIA divisions for Sunday afternoon meetings, publishing his Liberty Hall

¹⁰⁷ Marcus Garvey, “A Talk With Afro-West Indians,” Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Booker T. Washington Papers, *DLC*, in Hill, 1:55-64; quoted in Vincent, 98.

¹⁰⁸ Marcus Garvey, “A Journey of Self-Discovery,” 73.

¹⁰⁹ Marcus Garvey to Booker T. Washington, Kingston, Jamaica, September 8, 1914. Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Booker T. Washington Papers, *DLC*, Typed letter signed, Recipient’s copy; in Hill, 1:66-67.

¹¹⁰ Hill, 1:.

addresses word-for-word in the pages of the *Negro World*, the UNIA's official organ, and recognizing the power of the press in influencing thought as Washington had done.¹¹¹ His international convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in 1920 had a much bolder agenda than Washington's 1912 conference, but as Rolinson points out, "with the end of World War I and deteriorating race relations in the United States, conditions had drastically changed."¹¹² From the start of the UNIA Garvey declared that "the society is non-political" and suggested that members "eschew politics as a means of social improvement."¹¹³

The constitution of the UNIA included "principles of organized benevolence," including "to reclaim the fallen of the race," and "to administer to and assist the needy," and the preamble stated that "the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities' League is a social, friendly, humanitarian, charitable, educational, institutional, constructive and expansive society, and is founded by persons, desiring to the utmost, to work for the general uplift of the Negro peoples of the world."¹¹⁴ The organization's charter of incorporation was filed in order "to promote and practice the principles of Benevolence, and for the protection and social intercourse of its members."¹¹⁵ Garvey would promote "social uplift work" when he ultimately established the UNIA's international offices in New York.¹¹⁶

As Wintz points out, Garvey combined "the self-help, community development, industrial education aspects of Washington's philosophy with the internationalist pan-Africanism

¹¹¹ Rolinson, 43.

¹¹² Rolinson, 43.

¹¹³ Marcus Garvey, *Gleaner*, Thursday, September 23, 1915, in Hill, 151-52.

¹¹⁴ Hill, lxii-lxiii.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Butler Library, Columbia University, New York, Nicholas Murray Butler Papers, *NNC*, circular appeal letter, New York, ca. April-June 1918, in Hill, 242-44.

that he had picked up in London.”¹¹⁷ Garvey’s program only had moderate success, drawing approximately one hundred members in two years, and he blamed his shortcomings on the hostilities of the light-skinned Jamaican upper class.¹¹⁸ Garvey attributed the lack of support from the wealthier Jamaican class to indifference and the failure of his movement to thrive in Jamaica convinced him that he would need to leave the island.

2.14 The Class Appeal of Garvey’s Propaganda (June 1914 – March 1916)

Garvey’s speeches, publications and correspondences during the period between his return to Jamaica from London and his sojourn to the United States reveal a class consciousness that was at the center of his ideology at this point. By examining these examples it is clear that Garvey was thinking about uplifting his people through the framework of a class struggle during this period. Separatism, nationalism and capitalism were not yet present in his propaganda. As early as October 23, 1914, the UNIA claimed that their society was non-political.¹¹⁹ Garvey maintained this assertion throughout most of his life, and felt obliged to frequently remind readers and listeners that his organization did not identify with a political party. Although non-political and non-partisan the UNIA exhibited a class consciousness and focused its primary objectives on working to uplift poor Jamaicans from poverty and struggle. On November 28, 1914, in an effort to “get in touch with all shades of labour in the country so as to be able to help employers and workers in reaching one another,” the association opened an Employment Bureau.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Wintz, 11.

¹¹⁸ Wintz, 11.

¹¹⁹ *Gleaner*, Friday, October 23, 1914, in Hill, 1:82-85; *Gleaner*, Saturday, August 21, 1915, in Hill, 1:129-132.; *Jamaica Times*, Saturday, November 13, 1915, in Hill, 1:160-61.

¹²⁰ “Improvement and Conservation Association,” *Daily Chronicle*, Saturday, November 28, 1914, in Hill, 1:93.

In January 1915, Garvey published an article in which he described the aims of the UNIA, including training young men and women “to a higher state of application among the more advanced classes,” “to reclaim the fallen and degraded of the people (especially the criminal class) and help them to a state of good citizenship; to work among, administer to, and help the needy...and finding work for the unemployed.”¹²¹ Garvey reiterated these class conscious themes in a report to the *Gleaner* in August 1915, which described these aims of his organization.¹²²

While claiming to be non-political, during this period Garvey began associating with a number of supporters and leaders on the left, who were quite vocal in their advocacy of the labor movement and progressive politics. At their weekly meeting in February of 1915, the UNIA featured Rev. R.A.L. Knight, who spoke of his experiences in Canada. Knight painted a utopian picture, claiming that there was no social distinction in that country, that agriculturally and industrially the people had no prejudice against labor, and he encouraged listeners to appreciate labor, pointing out that by sticking to the soil, people and country could advance.¹²³ A month after Knight’s speech, Garvey himself began using language that reflected the class consciousness of his organization:

[T]he first step to the up-growth of the people [is] not the establishment of a primary aristocracy, but the manifestation of a common interest in the advancement of the people...How can a people speak of aristocracy when the aristocratic chap has his brother who belongs to the same kind loitering on the streets or idling in the gutter and being classified with the rogues and vagabonds of the country?¹²⁴

¹²¹ “The Universal Negro Improvement Association: What it Aims At. Real Aristocracy of Race,” *Jamaica Times*, Saturday, January 16, 1915 in Hill, 1:103-104.

¹²² “First Annual UNIA Report,” *Gleaner*, Saturday, August 21, 1915 in Hill, 1:129-30.

¹²³ “The New Society,” *Gleaner*, Thursday, February 4, 1915 in Hill, 1:110.

¹²⁴ “Address by Marcus Garvey,” *Daily Chronicle*, Friday, March 26, 1915 in Hill, 1:115.

In September 1915, the UNIA reiterated that its aim was “to lift the people of the struggling class to a better and more comfortable state of living.”¹²⁵ The association stated its desire to do its share to help raise the condition of the unfortunate people, and said that “to raise the position of the masses is to strengthen and advance the position of the classes and society.”¹²⁶ Garvey and the association began to use the phrases “betterment of the masses” and “raise the position of the masses” from this point through Garvey’s departure to the United States in March 1916, as evident in letters and articles in the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Gleaner* and the *Jamaica Times*.¹²⁷ Introducing Garvey at a UNIA meeting in November 1915, Rev. J.T. Dillon said, “I have had the opportunity of reading from the newspapers of the position Mr. Garvey was taking...I want to say that anything that goes toward the betterment of the masses of this country we should welcome and give our support.”¹²⁸ The class struggle was at the center of the UNIA’s objectives during this period. Although the class struggle included both blacks and whites, Jamaica’s population, including most of the working class, was predominantly black, making Garvey’s audience predominantly black as well.

Garvey drew a distinctive class line between himself and those critics he deemed the “aristocratic class.” In a rebuttal to a critical editorial by Alexander Dixon, a co-founder of the National Club and the first black man to be elected to the Legislative Council in Jamaica, Garvey claimed, “I am not representative of Mr. Dixon’s class. Mr. Dixon is of the ‘aristocratic class.’ I

¹²⁵ “Appeal by Marcus Garvey to Leo S. Pink’s Criticism in the *Daily Chronicle*,” *Gleaner*, Thursday, September 9, 1915 in Hill, 1:138-9.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid; “UNIA Appeals Active Members Wanted for the Universal Negro Improvement Association of Jamaica,” *Daily Chronicle*, passim November 1915 in Hill, 1:168; Marcus Garvey to Robert Russa Moton, February 29, 1916, Robert Russa Moton Papers, Hollis Burke Frissell Library, Tuskegee Institute in Hill, 1:177-8; “UNIA Meeting in St. Ann’s Bay,” *Jamaica Times*, Saturday, November 13, 1915, in Hill, 1:161; Marcus Garvey to R.R. Moton, February 29, 1916, Hollis Burke Frissell Library, Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, Robert Russa Moton Papers, Autograph letter signed, Recipient’s copy.

¹²⁸ “UNIA Meeting in St. Ann’s Bay,” *Jamaica Times*, Saturday, November 13, 1915 in Hill, 1:161.

am of the humblest class...Men of the 'Dixon School' stand in the way of general improvement among the common people. Their one mission is to disgust everybody who attempts to say or do anything to bring about a change in their condition."¹²⁹ In fact, Garvey's sensitivity to criticism became increasingly apparent during this period, as dissenters began questioning his motives and qualifications.

2.15 Early Criticisms and Garvey's Responses (August 1915 – March 1916)

An examination of some of Garvey's early battles with critics during this period reveals a vindictiveness that would follow him for the rest of his life and affect the way he responded to criticism. When an article written by Garvey for the British magazine, the *Tourist*, in June 1914, was reprinted in a leading Jamaican newspaper, the *Daily Chronicle*, on August 26, 1915, a number of dissenters emerged. Among them were W.G. Hinchcliff, a Jamaican labor leader, Dr. Leo Pink, a dentist, Alexander Dixon, a co-founder of the National Club, and several anonymous sources. These men took offense to what they interpreted as Garvey's negative remarks on the character and culture of the common people. Although Garvey's purpose for the article was to proclaim his intentions to help those of his people who were unfit for good society to become cultured and respectable, some of his comments were justifiably interpreted as contemptible and condescending:

The bulk of our people are in darkness and are really unfit for good society. To the cultured mind the bulk of our people are contemptible – that is to say, they are entirely outside the pale of cultured appreciation. You know this to be true, so we need not get uneasy through prejudice. Go into the country parts of Jamaica and you see there villainy

¹²⁹ "Marcus Garvey to the *Gleaner*," *Gleaner*, Friday, March 3, 1916 in Hill 1:183-4.

and vice of the worst kind; immortality, obeah¹³⁰ and all kinds of dirty things are parts of the avocation of a large percentage of our people.¹³¹

Garvey's statements were first criticized in editorials in the *Daily Chronicle* by "Progress" on September 7, 1915, and by Leo S. Pink on September 10, 1915. While "Progress's" criticism was tame in nature Dr. Pink personally attacked Garvey, questioning what he had done with collected donations and saying that "no cultured man would make such statements," that "Mr. Garvey must not think for one moment he can be a Booker Washington, as great men are born, not made," and that Garvey had "driven the death-nail into the casket of the Universal Negro Society."¹³² Dr. Pink's criticisms were supported by editorials in the *Daily Chronicle* from Alexander Dixon and from anonymous letters by "A Jamaican," "Another Jamaican," and "Disgusted."¹³³ "Another Jamaican" also personally attacked Garvey, suggesting that he "should try to improve himself before undertaking to improve others" and that his statements had betrayed "an uncommon degree of colossal self-conceit and unmitigated snobbishness on the part of the author."¹³⁴

Garvey was so personally affected by his critics that he wrote to Booker T. Washington for support on September 11, 1915, telling him that although the attacks were rather personal, his "integrity stands above the malice and envy of these persons in Jamaica" and that he was not

¹³⁰ obeah (*n*): a system of belief among blacks chiefly of the British West Indies and the Guianas that is characterized by the use of magic ritual to ward off misfortune or to cause harm.

¹³¹ Marcus Garvey, *Daily Chronicle*, August 26, 1915, in Hill, 1:132-36.

¹³² "Progress' to the *Daily Chronicle*," *Daily Chronicle*, Tuesday, September 7, 1915 in Hill, 1:137; "Leo Pink to the *Daily Chronicle*," *Daily Chronicle*, Friday, September 10, 1915 in Hill, 1:138; "Leo Pink to the *Daily Chronicle*," *Daily Chronicle*, Thursday, September 16, 1915 in Hill, 1:144-5.

¹³³ "A Jamaican' to the *Daily Chronicle*," *Daily Chronicle*, Tuesday, September 14, 1915 in Hill, 1:140; "Another Jamaican' to the *Daily Chronicle*," *Daily Chronicle*, Tuesday, September 14, 1915 in Hill, 1:141-2; "Disgusted' to the *Daily Chronicle*," *Daily Chronicle*, Tuesday, September 14, 1915 in Hill, 1:142-3; Alexander Dixon, "Alexander Dixon to the *Daily Chronicle*," *Daily Chronicle*, Monday, September 20, 1915 in Hill 1:147-8.

¹³⁴ "Another Jamaican' to the *Daily Chronicle*," *Daily Chronicle*, Tuesday, September 14, 1915 in Hill, 1:141-2.

affected. In his letter, Garvey maliciously referred to Dr. Pink as “an unknown dentist.”¹³⁵ Although an anonymous source wrote to the *Jamaica Times* in Garvey’s defense, calling the attacks severe and pointing out that Dr. Pink had identified with a society that was a rival of Garvey’s, more critical letters and editorials soon followed.¹³⁶ Like Dr. Pink, Alexander Dixon criticized the organization’s use of collected money. He listed Garvey’s critics, identifying them a “real cultured representatives,” and insulted Garvey by pointing out that he is “very little known in Kingston, much less in the island of Jamaica.”¹³⁷ Garvey determination to combat criticism led him to hold a UNIA general meeting on September 21, 1915, barely two weeks since Dr. Pink’s first critical editorial appeared, to “reply to his critics and further explain the attitude of the association in the work of uplifting the people.” Garvey explained what he meant by his controversial remarks by attesting that “the bulk of the people falls below cultured appreciation, if these were cultured, then all would be well.” Garvey ridiculed the accusation that he was not respected in Jamaica, and claimed that the charge that he had collected money for his own purpose was “a wicked and cruel lie.”¹³⁸ He refused to retract his indictments, reiterated the need for improvement, and warned all Jamaicans to avoid politics.¹³⁹

A little more than two weeks after his first correspondence Garvey wrote to Washington again, including individual copies of the newspapers containing his criticisms. Garvey complained to Washington about being outrageously criticized by an “inspired class” of four

¹³⁵ Marcus Garvey to Booker T. Washington, September 11, 1915, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Booker T. Washington Papers, Typed letter signed, Recipient’s copy in Hill, 1:141.

¹³⁶ *Jamaica Times*, Saturday, September 18, 1915 in Hill, 1:145-6.

¹³⁷ Alexander Dixon, “Alexander Dixon to the *Daily Chronicle*,” *Daily Chronicle*, Monday, September 20, 1915 in Hill, 1:147-8.

¹³⁸ Marcus Garvey, “Reply of Marcus Garvey to Critics,” *Gleaner*, Thursday, September 23, 1915 in Hill, 1:151-2.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

colored men, reflecting the class consciousness that dominated his ideology at this time. Garvey points out that only two of his critics “had the courage to sign their names,” and claims that the news editor of the paper has allowed the attacks because he “happen[s] to pass his paper over when giving advertisements out to the Press.”¹⁴⁰ Garvey also wrote to the *Gleaner* two days after writing Washington, defending himself, and claiming that only a portion of his speech had been published and taken out of context.¹⁴¹ A few weeks later, on October 19, 1915, Alexander Dixon wrote to the *Daily Chronicle*, criticizing Garvey for replying at a meeting rather than through the press. “At that meeting I am told he abused me, called me a liar and promised that when he was through with me there would not be a shred of Alex. Dixon remaining...”¹⁴² Garvey responded by writing to the *Daily Chronicle* two days later, requesting that his original letter be published in full so that Dixon’s misrepresentation of his words would be clear. He then challenged Dixon to a public debate so that the issues could be decided by the judgment of the people. “I dispute Mr. Dixon’s claim of being a leader because I think him incompetent and I guess he thinks the same of me...”¹⁴³

Around this time an important transition in Garvey’s treatment of dissenters occurred when he began referring to them not as “critics” but as “enemies.” At a UNIA meeting in November 1915, Garvey mentioned “the enemies of the cause,” pointing out that the consensus of public opinion had been in his favor despite a fellow townsman who “thought it fit and proper

¹⁴⁰ Marcus Garvey to Booker T. Washington, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Booker T. Washington Papers, Typed letter signed, Recipient’s copy, September 27, 1915 in Hill, 1:153.

¹⁴¹ “Marcus Garvey to the *Gleaner*,” *Gleaner*, September 29, 1915, in Hill, 1:154.

¹⁴² Alexander Dixon, “Alexander Dixon to the *Daily Chronicle*,” *Daily Chronicle*, Tuesday, October 19, 1915 in Hill, 1:157-59.

¹⁴³ Marcus Garvey, “Marcus Garvey to the *Daily Chronicle*,” *Daily Chronicle*, Thursday, October 20, 1915 in Hill, 1:159-60.

to attack me most outrageously and wickedly.”¹⁴⁴ Garvey was referring to Alexander Dixon, Leo Pink and the others who had written letters to the newspapers criticizing his “bulk of our people are unfit” comment. This meeting was originally scheduled for the night before, but was rescheduled because the automobile carrying Garvey was in an accident on the way to the meeting, fueling Garvey’s anxiety that his enemies were out to get him. Garvey recalled the incident in 1921, suggesting that it was a plot to get him to pay for the car and miss his speech at the meeting because people were against his cause.¹⁴⁵ The same week of the meeting, Garvey’s plans to establish a Jamaican Tuskegee would be forever altered with the death of Booker T. Washington.

On February 29, 1916, Garvey wrote to R.R. Moton, Washington’s successor, explaining that he desired an interview but was discouraged by “the unkindly attitudes” of his “personal enemies who have been using their unrighteous influence” to try to defeat his efforts.¹⁴⁶ He went on to mention a secret campaign that he believed was being waged by “so called representative of our own people,” who were “parading themselves as ‘wolves in sheep’s clothing’” and who were “desirous of destroying the existence of a Negro Society.”¹⁴⁷ Garvey told Moton that he could not yet expose his plans to advance his people because of the fact that he was engaged in a battle with his many foes, who were anxious to misrepresent him and who would attempt to defeat any hope of immediate success.¹⁴⁸ Garvey’s assertion that his enemies were “the carrier of

¹⁴⁴ Marcus Garvey, “UNIA Meeting in St. Ann’s Bay,” *Jamaica Times*, Saturday, November 13, 1915, in Hill, 1:160-63.

¹⁴⁵ Marcus Garvey, *Gleaner*, Thursday, April 21, 1921, in Hill, 1:163, no. 1.

¹⁴⁶ Marcus Garvey to R.R. Moton, February 29, 1916, Hollis Burke Frissell Library, Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, Robert Russa Moton Papers, Autograph letter signed, Recipient’s copy in Hill, 1:177-78.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

poison, akin to the serpent,” demonstrates the growing vindictiveness, irrationality and sensitivity that were becoming an influential element of his personality.

Days before Garvey left for the United States with the intention of establishing a Jamaican Tuskegee on March 6, 1916, Alexander Dixon once again wrote to the *Gleaner*, reiterating his previous criticisms of Garvey and blaming him for introducing the friction.¹⁴⁹ Garvey responded two days later with his last correspondence to the *Gleaner*. This final editorial reflects Garvey’s growing suspiciousness that his enemies were conspiring to ruin his efforts. Garvey attested that Dixon was trying to misrepresent him again, and that his enemies, who he promised to unmask one day, had been actively engaged at work for some time trying to do their best to “swamp” him.¹⁵⁰ The class appeal of Garvey’s propaganda began to become more visible, even in his replies to critics. In his final editorial to the *Gleaner*, Garvey stated that he is “of the humblest class,” and that “men of the ‘Dixon School’ stand in the way of general improvement among the common people. Their one mission is to disgust everybody who attempts to say or do anything to bring about a change in their condition.”¹⁵¹

By March 1916, Garvey’s sense of purpose, that he was to uplift the masses of his countrymen, was clear in his writings and speeches. Yet his commitment to combat his critics remained a central theme in those speeches and correspondences. When he wrote to Moton, shortly before leaving Jamaica, Garvey informed him that he had adopted the “Washington platform” as the basis for the program of his organization.¹⁵² Yet Garvey’s determination to

¹⁴⁹ Alexander Dixon, “Alexander Dixon to the *Gleaner*,” *Gleaner*, Wednesday, March 1, 1916 in Hill, 1:176-77.

¹⁵⁰ Marcus Garvey, “Marcus Garvey to the *Gleaner*,” *Gleaner*, Friday, March 3, 1916 in Hill, 1:183-4.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Marcus Garvey to Robert Russa Moton, February 29, 1916, Robert Russa Moton Papers, Hollis Burke Frissell Library, Tuskegee Institute, in Hill, 1:177-83.

present his ideas was undermined by personal traits developed early in his life. An attached communication was sent with the letter to Moton that is indicative of both Garvey's growing obsession with his "enemies" and of the class consciousness that was central to his ideology during this period:

Our people are not encouraged to be clean and decent because they are kept down on the lowest wage with great expences [*sic*] hanging over them... This is the grinding system that keep the blackman down here, hence I personally, have very little in common with the educated class of my own people for they are the bitterest enimies [*sic*] of their own race.¹⁵³

In the same letter, Garvey wrote that the "'race problem' is a paradox. I personally would like to solve the situation on the broadest humanitarian lines. I would like to solve it on the platform of Dr. Booker T. Washington... hence you will find that up to now my one true friend as far as you can rely on his friendship, is the whiteman."¹⁵⁴ As Hill points out, "Garvey left for the United States endowed with an ideology shaped by the nexus within the peasant economy of Jamaica, in which independent peasant cultivators and artisans played an important role."¹⁵⁵ Garvey's ideology, a social consciousness and belief in self-governance rooted in his Caribbean experience, would soon incorporate the racial consciousness and belief in social justice of the African-American community.

Garvey's ideas about racial uplift were shaped by two sets of events: the degraded life of black workers and the need for radical action developed from his early work and travels in Central America, and his introduction to black intellectual life in London, namely pan-Africanism and social uplift. The values Garvey obtained from both of these experiences are reflected in his first UNIA organization in Jamaica.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Hill, 1:xxxvii.

2.16 The Class Appeal of Garvey's Propaganda during his First Year in the United States (March 1916 – April 1917)

The differences between the plight of the black communities in Jamaica and the United States were shocking to Garvey, especially the racial oppression of the African-American community. Garvey would proclaim in later years, “the difficulty about the West Indies [to be] that the Negroes there haven't the racial consciousness possessed by the Negroes of the United States nor those of Africa.”¹⁵⁶ Garvey found that “the American Negroes are the best organized and the most conscious of all the Negroes in the world. They have become so because of their peculiar position. They live in very close contact with organized racial prejudice, and this very prejudice forces them to a rare consciousness that they would not have had otherwise.”¹⁵⁷ As opposed to Jamaican blacks Garvey argued that African-Americans were socially and politically different due to institutionalized racism and the fact that American blacks had to live in direct contact with oppressive whites. Jamaican blacks made up a vast majority of the population and were thus far removed from direct contact with racial oppression.

Garvey attributed his organization's failure in Jamaica to the fact that during that period Jamaicans “were not sufficiently racially conscious to appreciate a racial movement because they lived under a common system of sociological hypocrisy that deprived them of that very racial consciousness.”¹⁵⁸ He believed that he would have success in the United States because “the Negro was forced to a consciousness of his racial responsibility.”¹⁵⁹ After being in the United States for eight months, Garvey wrote an article for the *Champion Magazine*, an African

¹⁵⁶ Marcus Garvey, “Centenary of Negro Emancipation,” *Black Man*, (May – June, 1934) 11, in Hill, 1:xxxviii, no. 9.

¹⁵⁷ Marcus Garvey, “A Dialogue: What's the Difference?,” chap. 2, *Black Man*, (August – September 1935): 14, in Hill, 1:xxxviii, no. 10.

¹⁵⁸ Marcus Garvey, “What is the U.N.I.A.?” *Black Man*, (December 1933): 5, in Hill, 1:xxxviii, no. 11.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

American Chicago journal, in which he claimed that “the West Indies has produced no Fred Douglass, or Booker Washington...simply because the Negro people of that section started out without a race consciousness.”¹⁶⁰ Garvey and his organization’s program would combine the social consciousness of the Caribbean, with its focus on working through the power of the state, and the racial consciousness of the United States.

In the period between his arrival in the United States in March 1916 and the end of 1917, Garvey decided that the liberation and economic development of African peoples everywhere could only be achieved through the unification of resources of wealth, business experience and leadership. His plan to establish a Tuskegee-like industrial school for Jamaicans evolved into a plan to organize black industry and wealth. After a speaking tour through thirty-eight states Garvey was so impressed with the accomplishments of African Americans, especially compared to what he perceived as the lack of progress made by blacks in Jamaica, that he decided to move his base of operations from Jamaica to New York.

In little more than two years, between Garvey’s arrival in the United States on March 24, 1916 and July 2, 1918, the UNIA had been incorporated by the state of New York. His perception of race relations in the United States was shaped by his formative Caribbean experience. While Garvey would enter a new “political phase,” as Hill puts it, after July 1921, during the period 1918-1921, Garvey’s propaganda demonstrated an immense sympathy with the black American left and the labor movement.¹⁶¹ In 1920, he claimed that the color red in the UNIA flag “showed their sympathy with the ‘Reds’ of the world, and the green their sympathy

¹⁶⁰ Marcus Garvey, “West Indies in the Mirror of Truth,” *Champion Magazine*, 1 (Chicago, January 1917): 167-68, in Hill, 1:197-201.

¹⁶¹ Hill, General Introduction, *Marcus Garvey and UNIA Papers*, 1:lxxviii-lxxxii.

for the Irish in their fight for freedom.”¹⁶² However, when J. Edgar Hoover and federal authorities blocked his return to the United States in 1921 after a trip to the Caribbean, as Hill notes, “Garvey abandoned his earlier espousal of resistance” and “acquired a special logic, so that the dogma of racial purity now became the basis of the UNIA’s search for legitimacy.”¹⁶³ In a “retreat from radicalism” that coincided with his return to the United States, after a visa was finally granted, Garvey began denouncing the NAACP’s commitment to “social equality,” and other leftist groups committed to combating the class struggle.¹⁶⁴ Government pressure alone did not force Garvey to change his ideology and Garvey did not simply change his ideology to accommodate his desire to return to the United States. Garvey’s program began to change in the years prior to his retreat from radicalism and would have changed even without government pressure.

During his first year in the United States Garvey began associating with African American race leaders, many of whom were known socialists, anarchists, and leftists. In his promotional pamphlets and speeches, Garvey quoted at length from Elbert Hubbard, a self-described anarchist and socialist, suggesting that readers “get a copy of [Hubbard’s] *Scrap Book*. Ask any publisher in your town to get it for you. It contains invaluable inspiration.”¹⁶⁵ Ida B. Wells-Barnett was a militant journalist, “antilynching crusader,” radical journalist, founder of the first black women’s suffrage group in 1910, and a co-founder of the NAACP.¹⁶⁶ Garvey was the dinner guest of Wells-Barnett and her husband when he visited Chicago in 1916, and Wells

¹⁶² Marcus Garvey to White, August 18, 19120, in Hill, 2:19, 603.

¹⁶³ Hill, 1:lxxx-lxxxi.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 1:lxxviii-lxxxix.

¹⁶⁵ Marcus Garvey, “Intelligence, Education, Universal Knowledge, and How to Get It,” lesson 1, “School of African Philosophy,” September 1937, 18, in Hill, 1Lxlii, no. 24.

¹⁶⁶ Ida B. Wells, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), in Hill, 1:201, no.6.

enlightened Garvey about the true nature of lynching in the South.¹⁶⁷ Garvey had never experienced such atrocities in Jamaica and Wells-Barnett's firsthand accounts affected him. Irene Moorman Blackstone was one of the few people at Garvey's first public speech in New York. Blackstone was a well-known socialist and would become President of the Ladies' Division of the New York UNIA and one of the first to purchase stock in the UNIA's shipping line, the Black Star Line.¹⁶⁸ Although it is unclear if Blackstone had any influence on Garvey's political thought, Garvey clearly associated with significant figures in the black American left during this period.

2.17 Early Criticisms and Garvey's Responses during his First Year in the United States (March 1916 – April 1917)

Garvey's vindictiveness to his critics would escalate during his time in the United States beginning with his first lecture on May 9, 1916. Describing Garvey's lecture to a Harlem audience, W.A. Domingo, who had served with Garvey as secretaries in the National Club in Jamaica, made fun of Garvey's appearance, describing him as ape-like, short, with a dark complexion and a crumpled and ill-fitting suit. Domingo doubted the legitimacy of Garvey's self-proclaimed "tour" of the world and unsupported statement that he had "lectured" before audiences. He described Garvey's demeanor as visibly nervous, shaking, and pacing. According to Domingo, the audience began to "vent in disgust by whistling and hooting," shouting, "Sit

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ "Among the Negroes of Harlem," *Home News*, Sunday, December 9, 1917, in Hill 229-30; *New York Age*, February 15, 1919; *Negro World*, September 8, 1923, August 8, 1931, in Hill 1:224.

down! Shut up!” After losing his nerve, Garvey fainted and collapsed. Domingo referred to the incident as both comical and tragic.¹⁶⁹

Garvey wrote to T.A. McCormack, an officer in the Jamaican branch of the UNIA, in May 1916, promising to handle the ‘Jamaica League’ crowd that he had been reading about in the papers, “who have been trying to upset [the UNIA]” and who “are trying to form an association through E.E. Brown, [a high ranking official in the Jamaica League], to befool the Negro and make selfish capital out [of] him.”¹⁷⁰ The Jamaica League was organized to promote cooperative stores and local industries in Jamaica and Garvey considered them direct competition to his movement.¹⁷¹ While many critics in later years would paint Garvey as a selfish capitalist intent on swindling money out of his people for personal gain, in May 1916, Garvey accused his dissenters in the “Jamaica League” crowd of that very practice.¹⁷²

In a letter denouncing Garvey that was printed in the *Jamaica Times* on September 19, 1916, and signed by multiple critics, the authors attested that after attending several of his lectures, they found them “pernicious, misleading, and derogatory to the prestige of the Government and the people.”¹⁷³ Among Garvey’s damaging assertions were his remarks that governmental misrule caused economic depression, poverty and misery with detrimental consequences, and that governmental and commercial interests connived to keep the scale of wage so low that the laboring classes are “unable to meet the necessary demands to sustain their

¹⁶⁹ W.A. Domingo, “Account by W.A. Domingo of Marcus Garvey’s St. Mark’s Church Hall Lecture, New York, undated, lecture occurred May 9, 1916, Wilfred A. Domingo Papers, Autograph manuscript, in Hill, 1:190-92.

¹⁷⁰ Hill, 1:111-12, no.2.

¹⁷¹ Ibid; Marcus Garvey, “Marcus Garvey to T.A. McCormack,” May 1916, Thaddeus A. McCormack Papers, Barton, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica, Autograph letter signed, Recipient’s copy, in Hill, 1:193.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ “Letter Denouncing Marcus Garvey,” *Jamaica Times*, Saturday, October 7, 1916., in Hill, 1:196-97.

needs and wants.”¹⁷⁴ Although his ideas and program were not successful in Jamaica, Garvey’s remarks are indicative of his Caribbean class consciousness that remained a fundamental element to his ideology during this period as well. Garvey later claimed that he had “intended to return to Jamaica to perfect the Jamaica organization, but when we had enrolled about 800 or 1,000 members in the Harlem district and had elected the officers, a few Negro politicians began trying to turn the movement into a political club. Seeing that these politicians were about to destroy my ideals, I had to fight to get them out of the organization. There it was that I made my first political enemies in Harlem.”¹⁷⁵ Although Garvey was lecturing in the United States, his focus initially remained on Jamaica.

2.18 Conclusion

Garvey’s ideas about social uplift and radical action were formed out of his Central American experiences, as he witnessed the exploitation of the working class. His experiences with black intellectual life in London exposed him to the concept of pan-Africanism as a means of racial uplift. Garvey was thinking about uplifting the people of the struggling class to a better state of living from the time he returned to Jamaica from London through his speaking tour in the United States. He was quickly associated with leaders in the black American left and although his program and ideas were unsuccessful in Jamaica, a social consciousness and belief in self-governance rooted in his Caribbean experience remained a crucial aspect to his ideology. Garvey would soon incorporate the racial consciousness and belief in social justice of the African-American community into his program. Hence, his perception of race relations in the United

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

States was shaped by his formative Caribbean experience. Garvey's propaganda demonstrated a class appeal that supported the international left and the workers' movements from the time he arrived in the United States until after July 1921, when he entered a new political phase.

The economic opportunities in the United States created by World War I led Garvey to embrace the idea that black business enterprise, not industrialized training, was the key to civilizing and uplifting his race. Assessing the progress of the American Negro after eight months in the United States, Garvey crowned "the American Negro...the most progressive...in the expansive chain of scattered Ethiopia. Industrially, financially, educationally, and socially, the Negroes of both hemispheres have to defer to the American brother, the fellow who has revolutionized history in race development."¹⁷⁶ Garvey's evidence for this assertion was that the American Negro had produced such accomplished men and women within fifty years following slavery. However, after visiting some of what Garvey called "so-called Negro leaders" in the United States, he discovered "that they had no program" and "were mere opportunists who were living off their so-called leadership while the poor people were groping in the dark."¹⁷⁷

Garvey and the UNIA began to establish a program that combined the social consciousness that Garvey brought from his Caribbean experiences, focusing on working through the power of the state, with the racial consciousness of the United States, which championed African American nationality and social justice. While his sense of purpose drastically evolved after the death of Booker T. Washington, Garvey's hope for success through cooperation and

¹⁷⁶ Marcus Garvey, "West Indies in the Mirror of Truth," *Champion Magazine*, 1 (Chicago, January 1917): 167-68, in Hill, 1:197-201; Marcus Garvey, speech at meeting of Baltimore UNIA, December 18, 1918, enclosed with W.H. Loving to Director, MID, December 20, 1918, file 10218-261/33 and 34, MID, in RG 165, in Hill, 1:328-29.

¹⁷⁷ Marcus Garvey, "The Negro's Greatest Enemy," *Current History* 18, September 1923, 951-57, reprinted in Amy Jacques-Garvey, ed., *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, vol. 2 (New York: Antheneum, 1969), 124-34.

working within the state was forever altered on April 6, 1917, when the United States declared war against Germany.

CHAPTER 3: GARVEY’S “RADICAL PHASE” AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR (APRIL 1917 – FEBRUARY 1919)

This chapter covers a critical period of growth in the Garvey movement. Between the entry of the United States into the First World War, a year after Garvey’s arrival in the United States, and the arrival of the UNIA’s representatives at the peace conference in Paris on March 1, 1919, Garvey and his program’s message of African redemption evolved with the troubled state of the African American community. Since the outbreak of war in 1914, the increased demand for war-related labor empowered the American working class, fostering opportunities for the negotiation of wages and conditions. Furthermore, the Bolshevik Revolution’s success led many to believe that they could achieve quicker, more effective results through revolution as opposed to social reform. These conditions concerned many governments, including the United States, causing them to pay closer attention to organizations that they believed might have leftist ideals.¹⁷⁸

As the UNIA grew in the United States Garvey’s ideology became more radical than the self-sufficient pan-African Washington model he had once embraced. Garvey, whose organization had claimed since its earliest days in Jamaica to be non-political, attested in 1921: “[The] new spirit of the new Negro does not seek industrial opportunity. He seeks a political voice, and the world is amazed, the world is astounded that the Negro should desire a political voice, because after the voice comes a political place, and nobody thought the Negro would have asked for a place in the political sun of the world.”¹⁷⁹ According to Garvey, the problem facing

¹⁷⁸ David S. Foglesong, *American’s Secret War Against Bolshevism: U.S. Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1917-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 66; William Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-1932* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 142; James Weinstein, *The Decline of Socialism in America, 1912-1925* (New York: Rutgers University Press), 1967, 119-178.

¹⁷⁹ “Speech by Marcus Garvey,” *Negro World*, New York, October 22, 1921, in Hill, 4:120.

the New Negro was “a problem that must be resolved not by the industrial leader but by the political leader.”¹⁸⁰ Moving past Washington’s accommodationist model Garvey decided that “politics is the science that rules the world... although industry has a great deal to play in it.”¹⁸¹ Garvey’s program, which began with an ideology involving self-help, racial cooperation and benevolence, began to focus on the redemption of Africa and the global significance of black autonomy as its primary objective.

Not only did Garvey’s ideology evolve throughout the war, his stance on the war itself did as well. In October 1914, the UNIA issued a statement supporting England in the war effort, but by the end of the war, Garvey was urging blacks to refrain from sacrificing themselves in a white man’s war.¹⁸² Garvey’s frustration with the racism he observed within the labor movement extended to the way black veterans were treated upon returning home. By the end of the war, Garvey’s disappointment with the inequality of African Americans within white institutions became so great that he started to believe that racial cooperation could only be achieved through black power and autonomy.

As of September 22, 1917, a month before the first split in the UNIA, Garvey’s propaganda still demonstrated a strong class appeal, a testament to his Caribbean experience.¹⁸³ However, evidence of his frustration with the racial inequality that existed within American political and social institutions was becoming more evident in his propaganda. Garvey was especially frustrated with the United States government’s inability to address the lynching issue:

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ “Negroes Determined to Do for Themselves in Africa What White People Have Done in Europe and Elsewhere,” *Negro World*, Saturday, October 22, 1921, p.2, in Hill, 1:lxvii.

¹⁸² *London Times*, October 27, 1914, in Hill, 1:86.

¹⁸³ “Newspaper Report from the *Brooklyn Advocate*,” Printed in the *Jamaica Times*, Saturday, September 22, 1917, in Hill, 1:222-23.

“We should like to believe in our government’s professions of Democracy, but find it hard to do so in the presence of the facts.”¹⁸⁴ Garvey demanded that the United States enact laws making lynching a federal crime and compelling “the several states which now deprive the Negroes of their right to self-government, to give them the suffrage as Russia has done for the Jews.”¹⁸⁵

3.1 Race Riots

As racial violence erupted in the United States during and following the war, especially the Red Summer of 1919, Garvey, along with many African-Americans, began to give up on racial cooperation as a means to uplifting blacks from their conditions. Black soldiers returning from fighting for freedom in the war grew justifiably frustrated when faced with second class citizenship at home. Racial riots encompassed the United States during this period. The rise of white violence against blacks during and after the war forced African Americans to unite in resistance, creating a new racial consciousness that Garvey would use. The brutality of the Red Summer of 1919 and the United States government’s failure to protect black citizens from lynching incentivized many leaders in the black community to take action. In October 1919, Dr. George Edmund Haynes, co-founder of the National Urban League, issued a report that was published in the *New York Times* calling for national action, notably on lynching.¹⁸⁶ William H. Ferris would later attest that these riots, especially the brutal East St. Louis Riot of July 1917, were a catalyst for Garvey’s transformation into a nationalist champion of his race.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ George Edmund Haynes, “For Action on Race Riot Peril,” *New York Times*, October 5, 1919.

¹⁸⁷ *Philadelphia Tribune*, Thursday, June 27, 1940, in Hill, 1:lxviii.

While Garvey was on a lecture tour in New Orleans in 1917, East St. Louis, Illinois, Mayor Fred W. Mollman gave an interview to the New Orleans press encouraging blacks to go to East St. Louis, where he promised available work. In response the Louisiana Farmers and Board of Trade met with him and asked him to discourage blacks from going North, especially to East St. Louis, out of fear of losing their labor force. Mayor Mollman complied, giving a second interview the next day in which he stated that East St. Louis did not want Negroes and that he promised to do all in his power to prevent them from going there.¹⁸⁸ White workers in East St. Louis had been locked out in the midst of a labor strike and rumors that non-unionized black laborers were being recruited as strike-breakers created a hostile environment.¹⁸⁹ Violence ensued, including a number of lynchings, and the most brutal race riot in decades occurred. White organized labor officials, the most prominent of which was Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, became apologists for white labor's role and blamed the riots on the "excessive and abnormal number of negroes" in St. Louis.¹⁹⁰

Hubert Harrison, a radical socialist and founder of the Liberty League, who will be discussed in the next chapter, advised African Americans who feared mob violence to take direct action and "supply themselves with rifles and fight if necessary to defend their lives and property."¹⁹¹ This call for armed self-defense was echoed by Garvey in impassioned speeches following the riot. Garvey's reaction to the East St. Louis riot and the seemingly indifferent authorities reflected his increasingly hostile temperament. Days after the riot Garvey spoke at the

¹⁸⁸ Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *The East St. Louis Massacre: The Greatest Outrage of the Century* (Chicago: The Negro Fellowship Herald Press, 1917).

¹⁸⁹ Jeffrey B. Perry, *Hubert Harrison: The Voice of Negro Radicalism, 1883-1918* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 297.

¹⁹⁰ Grant, 98.

¹⁹¹ Perry, 299.

Lafayette Hall in New York, blaming Mayor Mollman for the violence. Witnessing first-hand the discriminatory practices of labor unions, Garvey was becoming convinced that blacks across the country and throughout the world were in need of unity:

I can not see wherefrom Mayor Mollman got the authority to discourage blackmen going into East St. Louis, when there was work for them, except he got that authority from mob sentiment and mob law. It was because he knew that he could gain a following and support on the issue of race why he was bold enough...He has succeeded in driving out fully 10,000 in one day out of the city, and the South has gone wild over the splendid performance...Can you wonder at the conspiracy of the whole affair? White people are taking advantage of blackmen to-day because blackmen all over the world are disunited.¹⁹²

Garvey attested that the United States had grown “from the labours of the people...until her wealth to-day is computed above that of any two nations,”¹⁹³ and referred to the East St. Louis Riot as a massacre that would “go down in history as one of the bloodiest outrages against mankind for which any class of people could be held guilty.” An article he wrote to the *New York Tribune*, questioning Theodore Roosevelt’s analysis of the riot, namely his accusation that organized labor was at fault, demonstrates Garvey’s growing radicalism. Garvey argued that since the conflict was racial, not economic, that it could not be resolved through “arbitration or something other than war.”¹⁹⁴ As Hodge Kirnon observed in a report on the Garvey movement in 1922, “an association of Negro peoples with the redemption of Africa as its ideal and ‘Africa for the Africans’ as a slogan seemed entirely foreign to Garvey’s mind at the time (of the founding of the UNIA in New York in the spring of 1918).”¹⁹⁵ Kirnon attributes these changes in Garvey’s

¹⁹² “Printed Address by Marcus Garvey on the East St. Louis Riots,” Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, D.C., *Conspiracy of the East St. Louis Riots Speech by Marcus Garvey Delivered at Lafayette Hall, New York, Sunday, July 8, 1917* (n.p., n.d.), in Hill, 1:212-222.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Marcus Garvey, *New York Tribune*, Jul 11, 1917, quoted in Stein, 41-42.

¹⁹⁵ “Hodge Kirnon Analyzes the Garvey Movement,” *Negro World*, Saturday, January 28, 1922, p.7, in Hill, 1:lxix.

original views to a “broader perspective which Garvey had gained in the course of time.”¹⁹⁶ The race riots and the end of the war were catalysts for Garvey’s ideological evolution from a program of benevolence and self-improvement to a political program of African redemption.

3.2 Class Appeal of Garvey’s Propaganda (April 1917 – February 1919)

Although Garvey’s movement was becoming a purely Negro movement he continued to reach out to whites for cooperation, writing Theodore Roosevelt on March 12, 1918, to invite him to speak at the UNIA’s upcoming “monster meeting,” which Garvey claimed was intended to “foster the spirit of race cooperation between the White and Black peoples of the world.”¹⁹⁷ While he was advocating armed self-defense and economic self-reliance, Garvey nonetheless called for racial cooperation even as his propaganda became increasingly radical.

The class appeal of Garvey’s propaganda was still very much a large part of his ideology at the end of the war in November 1918. Referring to the statesmen of various nations meeting at the Paris Peace Conference Garvey stated: “If they, representing the classes, as they once did, were alive to the real feeling of their respective masses four and one-half years ago, today Germany would have been intact, Austria-Hungary would have been intact, Russia would have been intact, the spirit of revolution never would have swept Europe, and mankind at large would have been satisfied. But through graft, greed and selfishness, the classes they represented then, as some of them represent now, were determined to rob and exploit the masses, thinking that the masses would have remained careless of their own condition for everlasting.”¹⁹⁸ However, in this

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Marcus Garvey to Theodore Roosevelt, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Theodore Roosevelt Papers, *DLC*, Typed letter signed, Recipient’s Copy, Corrections in Garvey’s hand, March 12, 1918, in Hill, 1:240-41.

¹⁹⁸ Marcus Garvey, “Advice of the Negro to Peace Conference,” *Negro World*, Saturday, November 30, 1918, in Hill, 1:302.

editorial Garvey demonstrated his emerging argument that while the First World War was a class war, the next world war would largely be a race war between whites, blacks and Asians.

Garvey's ideology dramatically changed with the racial strife that coincided with the end of the war. By December 18, 1918, he began to embrace the idea that the Negro race must compete economically with the whites and Asians in the emerging era of selfish greed and capital: "But this great war has brought about a change. It has driven the men of all races to be more selfish, and Negroes, I think Negroes of the world, have been observing, have been watching carefully, and have been scrutinizing all these statesmen I have named..."¹⁹⁹ Garvey believed that blacks had to embrace these international trends if they wanted to be at the table with the other powerful races of the world. He believed that the next war would be a war of races, beginning with "the white and yellow peoples," and urged blacks to make no compromise with either race because they had become the balance of power between Europe and Asia in that their worldwide total number of potential soldiers could help decide the outcome of the inevitable upcoming war.

On February 1, 1919, Garvey stated that when the representatives the UNIA sent returned from the Paris Peace Conference they would "take back with them the new thought and the new hope of industrial and commercial expansion and conquest."²⁰⁰ Garvey predicted that competition and Social Darwinism would dominate the next twenty-five years, with major

¹⁹⁹ Maj. Wrisley Brown to Lt. Col. H. A. Pakenham, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department General and Special staffs, records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 01218-261/21, Typed note, Carbon copy, Washington, D.C., December 21, 1918; Attachment, Meeting of the Baltimore Branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department General and Special staffs, records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-261/33, Typed document, The Final two sentences were handwritten by Maj. Loving, Baltimore, MD, December 18, 1918, in Hill, Vol.1, 329.

²⁰⁰ Marcus Garvey, "The Negro Should Be a Party to the Commercial Conquest of the World. Wake Up You Lazy Men of the Race – This is the Time of Preparation for All," *Negro World*, Saturday, February 1, 1919, in Hill, 351-53.

nations engaging in “commercial warfare.” He believed that these nations would send representatives “into all parts of the world to conquer and trade,” and that if Negroes were “to become a great national force that they must start business enterprises of [their] own.”²⁰¹ Garvey hoped that the conference of world leaders would provide an international stage for blacks to present their concerns and expectations in the newly carved post-war world, the most bold of which was a resolution to turn over the German colonies to Negroes under the rule of Negroes educated in the United States and Europe.²⁰² However, the mandates established for the confiscated territories of the enemies concluded that they would be best instructed by the “advanced nations” of the world.²⁰³ Garvey’s hope that blacks would be included at the Peace Conference proved to be a pipe dream and further solidified his opinion that blacks had to establish economic independence on their own.

While Garvey began advocating for commercial and industrial success as a means to uplift blacks, and even as his program became more racial, the class appeal of his propaganda remained a crucial aspect of his ideology. In an address at a UNIA meeting printed days later in the *Negro World* on February 1, 1919, Garvey said President Wilson had become the spokesman of the Socialist party of the world.²⁰⁴ He praised the President, claiming that he was speaking the language of the people, demonstrated by the upheavals in Europe and the uprisings abroad that “the millions of toilers of all countries were not prepared to entrust their fortunes to any select group within their own nations. The aristocracy that once ruled the common people must be

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Grant, 174-76.

²⁰³ Ibid, 176-77.

²⁰⁴ Marcus Garvey, “Marcus Garvey at the Crescent Hall. Big Meeting of New York Division of Universal Negro Improvement Association – Many New Members Added to Movement,” *Negro World*, Saturday, February 1, 1919, in Hill, 1:353-357.

destroyed according to the will of the common people...The equality of man has become indisputable. There can be but one [*aristocracy?*] today and that is labor...Hence, this significant passage that can be interpreted as rank Socialism. By the declaration of the President before the Peace Conference, it can easily be seen that labor has forced his hand.”²⁰⁵ Garvey’s criticism of the ruling aristocracy, class hierarchy and inequality of labor reflects the class appeal element that continued to be a major component of his increasingly radical propaganda. Garvey also acknowledged the mistrust of the ruling classes by the working class: “[T]he workers [are] suspicious of the class that has kept him down for centuries. So when anyone from within that class speaks in the language of the workers, it suggests that there may be enthusiasm over the declarations, but not a whole-hearted confidence.”²⁰⁶

Garvey praised trade unionism and attributed the success achieved in the United States Labor Movement to quality organizing. He claimed that “organization is the force that rules the world. It is that force that has changed the destiny of governments and of races. This, therefore, is a fair example to us as Negroes, that if we are to impose our wills on the powers that be, we must be as solidly organized as labor is today.”²⁰⁷ Garvey proclaimed that Samuel Gompers, the president of the American Federation of Labor, was “a greater force in American national life than even President Wilson, because Gompers stands as the exponent of labor.”²⁰⁸ While Garvey attributed the inequality within the labor movement as the reason that African Americans could not rely on anyone besides themselves to better their condition he suggested that Negroes use their methods as a means of achieving success:

²⁰⁵ Ibid, 354.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, 354-55.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

As far as Negroes are concerned, there is absolutely no one, no nation, or no race that they can place their confidence in. [The various statesmen of the world] have said nothing and done nothing to encourage us in the belief that they mean to be fair to our race...[T]here can be no abiding peace until all oppression has been removed from the people. That is the fiat of the working classes of Europe. It is the fiat of the working classes of America. And all these white people mean to pay the cost of the realization of their object even by their very lives. As Negroes, we have not yet set ourselves a determination.²⁰⁹

Garvey's frustration with the racial inequality that existed within the labor and class movements in the United States, beginning with white labor's role in the East St. Louis Riot, led him to the conclusion that the freedom of action and opportunity could only be achieved by Negroes after they established an imperial power of their own "to command the respect of nations and races."²¹⁰

By the time the UNIA's representatives arrived in Paris for the peace conference on March 1, 1919, Garvey's propaganda had become increasingly radical and aggressive, and racial nationalism continued to become a larger component of his ideology. According to a report printed in the *Afro-American* on February 28, 1919, Garvey delivered two speeches that week in which he made racially charged remarks.²¹¹ Garvey's speech was reportedly far more radical than his recent speeches had been in which he was encouraging black soldiers to fight for themselves rather than fighting and dying in another white war. Garvey allegedly said that all white people, and even more so the American white man, were cowards and bullies, and that to get even with them, "Negroes have got to win their freedom just as the Russians and the

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Marcus Garvey, "Address by Marcus Garvey in Brooklyn," *West Indian* (Mail Edition), Friday, February 28, 1919, in Hill, 1:373-76.

²¹¹ "Garvey Urges Organization. Radical New Yorker Says Time Has Come for Colored Soldiers to Fight for Themselves" *Afro-American*, Friday, February 28, 1919, Baltimore, Maryland.

Japanese have done – by revolution and bloody fighting.”²¹² Garvey reportedly claimed that while black Americans were “too hopelessly outnumbered” to attempt revolution, the over four hundred million Negroes in Africa could “make the white man eat his salt,” and that Africans are looking to African Americans for organizational assistance. These potentially seditious remarks were said to have been followed with a promise that there would be no peace until racial equality was achieved.

Years later Garvey explained the racial nationalistic element of his propaganda in class terms because the majority of blacks across the world belonged to the working or peasant class:

In this population [of Jamaica] there is a social arrangement whereby all positions of influence are held by a minority class. The bulk of the black people are kept in conditions bordering on serfdom, they are made up generally of the labouring class who receive but a pittance of wage...Because of this low scale of wages among the people crime is rife, our poor houses are filled....In the midst of this distress of the black majority we have a prosperous minority of white, coloured and a few black persons who have been taken under the patronage of the privileged minority.²¹³

One of the primary elements of the class appeal of Garvey’s propaganda was his distaste for privilege, within his race as well as in general. In an attack on black Harlem Republican Charles H. Roberts, in which he claimed that the candidate was backed by black capitalists and grafters, Garvey attested that “as the white folks in the labor unions, the Socialist group and the Progressive group are keeping their eyes on that selfish group of white people who are attempting to rob and exploit, so have you to keep your eyes on those selfish Negroes who have been crushing you for the last 20 years...[Y]ou, the workingman, have nothing in common with Dr. Charles Roberts...”²¹⁴

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Marcus Garvey to Rt. Hon. Philip Snowden, Chancellor of the Exchequer, February 27, 1930, CO 318/399/76634, Colonial Office records, Public Record Office, London, in Martin 232-33.

²¹⁴ *Negro World*, November 1, 1924.

Garvey would eventually urge his race to follow the example of white workers' revolts, stating, "The royal and privileged classes of idlers who used to tyrannize and oppress the humble hordes of mankind are now experiencing difficulty in holding their control over the sentiment of the people."²¹⁵ He also once said, "The downtrodden poor whites and blacks should join And prevent rich whites our rights to purloin."²¹⁶ While Garvey was critical of the racist practices of the American Federation of Labor, he had been a supporter of labor since his involvement the workers' struggles in Central America and Jamaica. Garvey's criticisms were focused on the inequality of blacks within labor organizations. He suggested that blacks work cheaper than their white competitors to sway employers to hire them, using the capitalist system to their advantage: "It seems strange and a paradox, but the only convenient friend the Negro worker or laborer has, in America, at the present time, is the white capitalist."²¹⁷

Although Garvey's was most involved in the labor movement when he left the United States for good and returned to Jamaica from 1927-1935, he would advocate the unionization of Jamaica labor and labor sponsorship of representative to the legislative council when he briefly returned to Jamaica in 1921.²¹⁸ Garvey paid attention to the labor movement in Jamaica after moving to the United States, sending a telegram from a UNIA meeting to the chairman of the Jamaican Federation of Labor to express their sympathy with a police strike in 1920.²¹⁹ Although this does not necessarily prove that Garvey had a strong commitment to labor it demonstrates that his propaganda reflected a strong class appeal during this period.

²¹⁵ *Negro World*, September 4, 1926.

²¹⁶ Marcus Garvey, *The Tragedy of White Injustice* (New York: A.J. Garvey, 1927): 14.

²¹⁷ Marcus Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*, II: 69.

²¹⁸ *Daily Gleaner*, June 2, 1921, quoted in Adolph Edwards, *Marcus Garvey* (London: New Beacon Publications, 1967): 15.

²¹⁹ Charles L. Lathan to Secretary of State, September 12, 1920, RG 59, 811108 G 191/1.

In 1919, the Communist International was founded in Moscow to advocate world communism and coordinate the international activities of the movement.²²⁰ Although it would be another year before “the Negro question” was first addressed by the congress, the United States government was immediately concerned with the relationship between blacks and the communist movement. By the time the American communist movement was realized in the form of the Workers Party in 1921, Garvey’s movement was internationally established and rapidly growing. The communists hoped to build a movement by recruiting the working masses, the very people who made up a majority of the Garvey movement, albeit the black working masses. Garvey was politically savvy enough to neither openly endorse nor denounce the communists.

As Martin demonstrates, although many communists and black leftists saw Garvey as a reactionary nationalist, Garvey shared similar ideals. Although he was adopting what Martin refers to as a “race first” ideology that would be a dominant theme of his movement, Garvey still acknowledged the class struggle of the oppressed masses and maintained a class component throughout his propaganda.²²¹

The class appeal of Garvey’s propaganda concerned the United States government to such an extent that an official from the State Department considered it as big a threat as communism. Charles Latham wrote to the Secretary of State, “Though he is certainly not an intellectual his particular propaganda and agitation is considered dangerous in that it will find a more fertile field of class divergence than Bolshevism would be likely to find in the United States.”²²² The Communists and the socialists had not found much success in black recruitment and Garvey’s popularity with the black masses gave the United States government concern that

²²⁰ Hill, 5:841.

²²¹ Martin, 231-32.

²²² Charles Latham to Secretary of State, August 24, 1921, RG 59, 811.108 G 191/24, in Martin, 232.

he might serve as a conduit to the black American left. Although Garvey intended to fly under the government's radar when it came to ties to the left, the fact that Bolshevism was not openly denounced at UNIA meetings and in Garvey's propaganda led officials to believe that he was pro-Bolshevism rather than apolitical. While he was not openly endorsing an ideology of class, Garvey's propaganda supported class solidarity.

3.3 Critics and Enemies

Garvey's fear of failure and determination to combat criticism impacted his response when a growing number of former colleagues in the black American left became critical of his program. By 1919, Garvey claimed that "the world has laughed at me, but I am going to strike a blow."²²³ As Hill points out, while "Garvey's single-minded preoccupation with success would give him a decisiveness that would contribute to his success as a propagandist, it also proved to be the cause of many of his costly misadventures."²²⁴

As the United States emerged from the war as a banking and finance powerhouse, Garvey began to consider control of industrial development as the key to uplifting his race. In 1919, the UNIA started to purchase properties where they would establish black owned and run businesses such as grocery stores, laundries, a publishing house, restaurants, dress shops and a greeting card company. Many of these businesses were part of the Negro Factories Corporation, an economic cooperative whose directors were elected annually at UNIA conventions.²²⁵ By encouraging blacks to support black businesses, Garvey hoped to accumulate black wealth that could be used

²²³ "Negro Agitation," National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department General and Special staffs, records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, 10218-364/1, in Hill, 1:xl.

²²⁴ Hill, 1:xxxix-xl.

²²⁵ Vincent, 103.

to strengthen Africa. Self-determination was becoming a focal point of Garvey's program due to his frustration with American institutions, especially after the race riots, and he began advocating the redemption of Africa and black autonomy.

The year 1919 was a pivotal year in the evolution of Garvey's ideology as he became determined to ensure that Africans and those of African descent were represented at the peace conference, attesting that if future wars were to be avoided Europe must relinquish its control of Africa to the Africans. The United States government watched him closer as a frustrated Garvey began advocating black retaliation for lynching and racial violence. He also attested that unless there was an end to colonialism that the next world war would be a race war. In 1919, the United States Department of Justice issued a report entitled "Radicalism and Sedition among the Negroes as Reflected in Their Publications," in which they asserted that a "dangerous spirit of defiance and vengeance [was] at work among the Negro leaders and, to an ever increasing extent, among their followers."²²⁶ The paranoia of United States officials, brought on by the Red Scare and race riots of 1919, led to increased surveillance of Garvey and the company that he kept. Garvey was aware that his associates in the black American left were being watched particularly close and he found excuses to distance himself from a number of them.

3.4 Split in the UNIA

Garvey's idea that personal success was a crucial element of a leader, and his anxiety about his enemies efforts to stop him intensified during his time in the United States. Even many of his friends and associates sooner or later found themselves involved in a conflict with the

²²⁶ A. Mitchell Palmer, "Radicalism and Sedition among the Negroes as Reflected in Their Publications," U.S. Congress, Senate, *Investigative Activities of the Department of Justice*, exhibit 10 of A. Mitchell Palmer, s. doc. 153, 66th Cong., 1st sess., 1919, 12:187.

man. In the first of two divisive splits in the UNIA, Duse Mohammed Ali, once a mentor to Garvey, wrote a letter to one of Garvey's critics, making damaging accusations about Garvey's character. The letter was read publicly, dividing the organization and leaving Garvey's faction with about fifty members.²²⁷ Ali had taken issue with Garvey's association with anti-war groups. Even anarchists and far-left groups in England, where Ali resided, generally supported the war effort, and "in opposing black involvement in the war Garvey had surpassed Ali's cultural nationalism."²²⁸ While the two would later resolve their differences, with Ali becoming a UNIA official, this first split in the organization caused Garvey to tighten his reins and become even more wary of his dissenters.

The second split came when Samuel Duncan, who would briefly seize control of the UNIA from Garvey in February 1918, Isaac B. Allen, president of the UNIA between November 29, 1917 and January 13, 1918, L. Lavell and other UNIA officials attempted to split the association in January 1918. Most of the early UNIA members in New York, including Duncan, were West Indies immigrants and felt the organization should serve primarily as an immigrant aid society.²²⁹ Duncan "used his control over the UNIA's funds to declare himself head of a separate UNIA."²³⁰ In language reflecting his vindictiveness Garvey described removing Duncan from the presidency of the newly formed New York division of the UNIA as having to "somewhat beat up" the man by "detaching him from the presidency."²³¹ In little more than a month Garvey was sued twice for wages; once by Anselmo Jackson and once by Dorothy

²²⁷ *Philosophy and Opinions*, vol. 2, 129; Cronon, *Black Moses*, 43.

²²⁸ Vincent, 100-101.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ "Garvey Tells Story of Bitter Struggles," *Pittsburgh Courier*, February 22, 1930, in Hill, 7:233.

Hensen. Both of these lawsuits were reported by the *Chicago Defender*.²³² Garvey's suspicion that his enemies were out to get him now extended to dissenters within his organization.

3.5 Editors of the *Negro World*

On August 17, 1918, the UNIA's official organ, the *Negro World*, began publication. As an experienced publisher, Garvey appointed qualified and respected editors at various times to help define the editorial content of the paper during its most critical years. W.A. Domingo, a Socialist and supporter of organized labor, whose negative account of Garvey's first speech in the United States was referenced earlier, became the first editor *Negro World*. Garvey would eventually bring Domingo in front of the UNIA's executive committee, accusing his editor of expressing views in his editorials that were inconsistent with the UNIA's. In July 1919, Domingo left the UNIA and became involved in several socialist journals.²³³ Domingo would be the first of many associates of Garvey in the black American left that would find themselves ostracized at the first sign of conflict after 1919.

Domingo was replaced with John E. Bruce and then William Ferris, a scholar, minister, writer and journalist with credentials shared with the most elite and educated members of African American society.²³⁴ While working as a writer for *Champion Magazine* in Chicago in 1917, William Ferris first met Marcus Garvey.²³⁵ Ferris's ideological influences are clear in the issues of the *Negro World* that he edited. As Randall K. Burkett demonstrates, Ferris's belief in Social Darwinism reflected his praise of the white race's aggressive pursuit of economic and

²³² "Reporter Sues Garvey," *Chicago Defender*, Saturday, September 29, 1918, in Hill, 1:283; "Marcus Garvey Sued Again," *Chicago Defender*, Saturday, November 2, 1918, in Hill, 1:283.

²³³ Hill, *Marcus Garvey: Life and Lessons*, 378.

²³⁴ Randall K. Burkett, *Black Redemption*, 65.

²³⁵ Rolinson, 78.

political power, and his belief that blacks should use this model to uplift themselves.²³⁶ During this period, Garvey, the magazine and the UNIA began to develop similar ideals. These ideals were very different from the cooperative, class conscious tradition that Garvey acquired from his Caribbean experiences, and ultimately helped shaped what would eventually become known as “Garveyism.”²³⁷

As Garvey had done in response to criticisms in Jamaica, Ferris would reprint the words of his critics, often along with a rebuttal, in the pages of the *Negro World*. This behavior likely influenced Garvey’s growing vindictiveness and the way that he responded to attacks and criticisms from his “enemies.” As Rolinson points out, “any competitor for leadership faced Ferris’s poison pen. This defense was accompanied by Garvey’s wrath, a sometimes pathological response that came to include people within his own organization.”²³⁸

3.6 USA vs. UNIA

Around the time that Garvey arrived in the United States the US government began paying close attention to what they considered radical organizations. Garvey first caught the attention of United States officials when he published a 1917 pamphlet entitled *Conspiracy of the East St. Louis Riots*, which was a synopsis of a critical speech of the same title delivered by Garvey.²³⁹ The pamphlet reported that Garvey’s speech was delivered, “before a large and enthusiastic gathering of Negro Americans and West Indians,” as well as “the Police Captain of

²³⁶ Burkett, 65-70.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Rolinson, 81-82.

²³⁹ Marcus Garvey, “The Conspiracy of the East St. Louis Riots,” Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, D.C., *Conspiracy of the East St. Louis Riots Speech by Marcus Garvey Delivered at Lafayette Hall, New York, Sunday, July 8th, 1917* (n.p., n.d.), in Hill, 1:212-20 .

the Borough Precinct,” “more than ten detectives, police lieutenants, and secret-service men.”²⁴⁰

While the United States government was interested in Garvey’s activities from the time he arrived in the country, their scrutiny escalated around June 3, 1918, when a report from the American Protective League to the Bureau of Investigation, entitled, “German Propaganda among Negroes in Harlem,” claimed that a police sergeant informed the investigator that a man named Garvey “preaches every night against the white people,” and suggests that “it might be a good idea to run down these negro speakers.”²⁴¹ Initially formed in March 1917, to assist the government in tracking German spies, the American Protective League would become responsible for counter-espionage and one of the largest sections in military intelligence operation by April 1918.²⁴²

The United States Department of Justice was responsible for most of the surveillance of Garvey. By September 9, 1918, the Bureau had confidential informants reporting to them on street meetings, speeches and activities involving “negro agitators.”²⁴³ The Bureau began receiving copies of the *Negro World* within a month of its first publication. The United States military began to pay closer attention to Garvey’s activities around November 1918. In a report from Brig. Gen. Marlborough Churchill to Lt. Col. Nicholas Biddle, the general claimed that Garvey “is circulating pamphlets which appeal to the racial instinct of the negroes and are

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ “Report by the American Protective League to the Bureau of Investigation,” National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department General and Special staffs, records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-116/29X, Typed document, Endorsements are handwritten, New York City, June 3, 1918, in Hill, 1:244-45.

²⁴² Col. Bruce W. Bidwell, “History of the Military Intelligence Division, Department of the Army General Staff,” XIII-7, p. 235, unpublished manuscript, 1959-61, Charles Barracks, Pa., United States Army Military History Institute, regarded unclassified July 20, 1979, in Hill, 1:244-45.

²⁴³ S.B. Pfeifer, “Bureau of Investigation Report,” National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 258421, Typed document, New York City [Made] September 18th [for the period of] September 9th [1918], in Hill, Vol.1, 281-82.

calculated to incite hatred for the white race,” and ordered Lt. Col. Biddle to investigate and report back to him.²⁴⁴ On November 7 and November 10, 1918, the *New York Call*, the official organ of the Socialist party, announced a UNIA convention that would discuss the Negro peace conference demands. Clippings from these reports were enclosed in a letter from Lt. Col. Nicholas Biddle to Brig. Gen. Marlborough Churchill on November 10, 1918.²⁴⁵ When J. Edgar Hoover replied to a correspondence from officials at the Panama Canal inquiring about the nature of Garvey’s threat he said that he genuinely regretted the fact that Garvey had not yet broken any federal laws and could not be deported. Hoover added that in the *Negro World*, “the Soviet Russian Rule is upheld and there is open advocacy of Bolshevism.”²⁴⁶

The Justice Department’s surveillance and infiltration of the UNIA could only have added to Garvey’s suspicions that his enemies were out to get him. Garvey was not only conscious of white reporters and enemies outside his organization but he was aware of traitors from within as well. Reflecting on his time in the United States shortly after his deportation, Garvey attested that the “Great United States Government got men to investigate me; all manner of Secret Service people were set after me, and 20 percent of my employees were United States

²⁴⁴ Brig. Gen. Marlborough Churchill to Lt. Col. Nicholas Biddle, Washington, D.C., November 20, 1918, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department General and Special staffs, records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-261/6 53 (50), Typed note, Carbon copy, in Hill, 1:298.

²⁴⁵ “Negroes of the World to Hold Convention for Race’s War Aims,” *New York Call*, Thursday, November 7, 1918; Clipping of a similar report a few days later (November 10, 1918) was enclosed in a letter from Lt. Col. Nicholas Biddle to Brig. Gen. Marlborough Churchill, November 18, 1918, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department General and Special staffs, records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 10218-255/2 2-1, in Hill, 1:284; W.H. Cowles, Chief MI4, War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, Washington, to the Secretary of the Treasury (Division of Appointments), August 29, 1922, General Records of the Department of Justice, 198940, in Hill, 4:1005.

²⁴⁶ J. Edgar Hoover, “Memorandum for Mr. Ridgely,” National Archives, Washington, D.C., General records of the Department of Justice, file 198940, Typed manuscript, recipient’s copy, Washington, D.C., October 11, 1919, in Hill, 1:72.

Secret Service. I believe that I must have cost the United States Government about five million dollars in ten years.”²⁴⁷

Shortly after the end of World War I, Garvey began advising black men to stay out of white wars until they gained their own freedom, stating, “The first dying that is to be done by the black man in the future will be done to make himself free. And then when we are finished, if we have any charity to bestow, we may die for the white man. But as for me, I think I have stopped dying for him.”²⁴⁸ When Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer took over the Bureau of Investigation he began using the organization to combat labor activities and break strikes.²⁴⁹ Black militancy and radicalism associated with the riots led Palmer to issue a report in 1919 entitled, “Radicalism and Seditious Activities Among the Negroes as Reflected in Their Publications,” in which he notes that a “dangerous spirit of defiance and vengeance [was] at work among the Negro leaders and, to an ever increasing extent, among their followers.”²⁵⁰ Palmer notes a speech that Garvey made “which preached a doctrine of the negro for the negro.” Garvey’s suggestion to black men to stop fighting for white and begin fighting for themselves put him into a “red-flagged” category, which encouraged the government to pay closer attention to him. Palmer believed that African Americans were the greatest medium for Bolshevism in America and that the Negro was not just a carrier but had already contracted the deadly virus of revolution and “was seeing Red.”

²⁴⁷ Marcus Garvey, “Speech at the Ward Theater,” *Negro World*, January 7, 1928, in Hill, Vol. 6.

²⁴⁸ Archibald E. Stevenson, ed., *Revolutionary Radicalism, Report of the Joint Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities, Filed April 24, 1920, In the Senate of the State of New York* (Albany, N.Y.: J.B. Lyon, 1920): 1514.

²⁴⁹ Max Lowenthal, *The Federal Bureau of Investigation* (New York: William Sloane Assoc., 1950); David Williams, “The Federal Bureau of Investigation and its Critics, 1919-1921: The Origins of Federal Sureveillance,” *Journal of American History* 68 (December 1981): 560-79, in Hill, 281-82 no.1.

²⁵⁰ Palmer, “Radicalism,” 159, reproduced in *Garvey Papers*, I, p.488.

In 1920, the Lusk committee of New York wrote a report on “Revolutionary Radicalism,” which expressed similar attitudes as Palmer’s report. The Lusk committee was formed by the New York State Legislature in 1919 to investigate individuals and organizations in New York State suspected of sedition.²⁵¹ In the report the committee suggested a law-and-order solution to groups determined to eradicate racism: “The very fact that the negro has many just causes of complaint adds to the seriousness of the propaganda, and should encourage all loyal and thoughtful negroes in this State to organize to oppose the activities of such radicals, which cannot but lead to serious trouble if they are permitted to continue the propaganda which they now disseminate in such large volume.”²⁵²

A report to Special Agent Raymond W. Finch, the chief investigator of the Lusk committee, acknowledges the use of “colored confidential informants,” who informed him of the seditious nature of Garvey’s speeches.²⁵³ Finch followed up with a report entitled, “Negro Agitation: Socialist Activities,” in which he claims that “Garvey’s speech bordered closely on sedition in that he prophesied a revolution of the negroes in the United States unless their demands were granted. This man’s nationality and antecedents will be closely investigated, and should it be found that he is not a citizen of the U.S., an effort will be made to locate stenographic minutes of this meeting for the purpose of taking up questions of disposing of Garvey, who could easily become a menace in these times.”²⁵⁴ Finch is referencing the Alien Act

²⁵¹ Palmer, “Radicalism,” 159.

²⁵² “Revolutionary Radicalism,” Report of the Joint Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities, Filed April 24, 1920, In the Senate of the State of New York (Albany, N.Y.: J.B. Lyon, 1920): 1476.

²⁵³ D. Davidson, “In RE: Marcus Garvey, Negro Propaganda,” New York City, [*Made*] November 12, 1918, [*for the period of*] November 9, 1918, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 329359, Typed document, Stamped endorsement, Copy of report furnished to Special Agent Finch, in Hill, Vol.1, 285.

²⁵⁴ Special Agent Raymond W. Finch, “In RE: Negro Agitation, Socialist activities,” New York City, [*made*] November 12, 1918, [*for the period of*] November 9, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 258421, Typed document, Carbon copy, in Hill, Vol.1, 285-86.

of 1918, which held that aliens who were associated with any organization that advocated the overthrow of the American government should be taken into custody and deported.²⁵⁵ The act was used during the Red Scare of 1919-1920 by the Bureau of Investigation to disrupt left-wing organizations with large alien memberships. Finch attested that he did not believe Garvey's organization to be a threat, but if combined with other organizations, specifically the Socialists, it could become a menace.²⁵⁶ Evidence that the United States government believed Garvey to be aligned with socialists and leftists filled reports made during this period. A newspaper clipping from the Socialist organ, the *New York Call*, containing an announcement of a UNIA convention was enclosed in a letter from Lt. Biddle to Gen. Churchill on November 18, 1918.

Disguised as a reporter for the *City News*, D. Davidson interviewed Garvey, telling him that he wanted a little of his history for their files for future use in a write up.²⁵⁷ In a series of reports on November 12, 1918 to Special Agent Finch, Davidson included several remarks Garvey made at a mass UNIA meeting a few days earlier.²⁵⁸ Based on these reports it is apparent that the Bureau was concerned that Garvey would attempt to mobilize black men to take up arms against the white nations that had failed them. Garvey is quoted as saying: "We are backed by four hundred million who we will mobilize if necessary and fight for what is our just rights... The time has come for the blackman to mobilize his forces against these whites... No nation is safe in

²⁵⁵ Robert Preston, Jr., *Aliens and Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); Leslie Fishbein, "Federal Suppression of Left-Wing Dissidence in World War I," *Potomac Review* (Summer 1974): 47-68.

²⁵⁶ Special Agent Raymond W. Finch, "In RE: Negro Agitation, Socialist activities," New York City, [*made*] November 12, 1918, [*for the period of*] November 9, 1918, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 258421, Typed document, Carbon copy, in Hill, 1:285-86.

²⁵⁷ D. Davidson, "In RE: Marcus Garvey, Negro Propaganda," New York City, [*made*] November 12, 1918, [*for the period of*] November 12, 1918 National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 329359, Copy of report furnished to Special Agent Finch, in Hill, 1:290-91.

²⁵⁸ Ibid; D. Davidson, "In RE: Marcus Garvey, Negro Propaganda," New York City, [*made*] November 12, 1918, [*for the period of*] November 10, 1918 National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 329359, Copy of report furnished to Special Agent Finch, in Hill, 1:286-90.

war when part of its internal population is dissatisfied...*I do not say there will be but there may be a revolution if we are not recognized...*We are determined to get liberty even at the cost of our lives.”²⁵⁹ Davidson’s report suggested a radical, militaristic aspect to Garvey’s propaganda that gave the Bureau cause for concern. Another important observation that can be ascertained from these reports is the fact that the Bureau still clearly associated Garvey with the black American left, specifically Socialists. Davidson pointed out that among the resolutions created at the meeting was a demand for social equality in countries where Negroes and people of other races lived side by side. He noted that among those invited to the meeting were Eugene V. Debs and Morris Hillquit, two of the leading Socialists of the period, although neither man attended.²⁶⁰

In response to Davidson’s reports Special Agent Finch launched an investigation into Garvey’s activities. Based on the observations of a police officer he had sent to observe a UNIA meeting, Finch filed a report on November 21, 1918, entitled “NEGRO AGITATION Socialist Activities,” in which he claims that Garvey advocated the use of the gun and bayonet by blacks, because if their weapons were unequal to those of whites they would continue to be at a disadvantage.²⁶¹ He also claimed that Garvey stated that when the million and a half soldiers returned from war and the UNIA was strong that they would ask for Africa for the Negro, and if it was not given, then they would fight for it. Perhaps Finch’s most damaging claim was that Garvey stated, “I hate the white man. I am Roman Catholic and I hate the Pope because he is a white man. If you all hated the white man as I do, we would have had our independence long ago...Some people say there will be no more wars after this, but they do not know what they are

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Special Agent Raymond W. Finch, “In RE: Negro Agitation, Socialist activities,” New York City, [*made*] November 21, 1918, [*for the period of*] November 14, 1918, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 258421, Typed document, in Hill, 1:291-93.

talking about. England and France will go to war and then our million and a half of colored soldiers and the rest of us will drive the white English and French into the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean and take Africa for ourselves.”²⁶²

In a report from Davidson to Agent Finch on December 5, 1918, Davidson referenced a *New York Tribune* clipping about a mass UNIA meeting presided over by Garvey, in which he had “preached a threat to mobilize millions of negroes, combined with Japan and take up arms for social equality.”²⁶³ The bureau’s concerns about Garvey’s determination to achieve social equality was one of the main reasons for targeting him. Davidson mentioned that the delegates chosen at this particular meeting to represent the Negroes at the Versailles conference were Asa Philip Randolph, a leading black socialist and Ida B. Wells Barnett, co-founder of the NAACP. The bureau continued to report that Garvey’s speeches and propaganda were evidently intended to start an uprising among the Negroes.²⁶⁴ Garvey’s suggestion that a white man be lynched for every Negro lynched only added to his reputation as a radical. It is unclear whether Garvey actually used the words reported by Davidson or if the words represented Davidson’s assumptions. To clarify Davidson’s accusations Agent Finch interviewed Louis Cantor, a reporter for the *New York Tribune*, who had attended the UNIA meeting in which Davidson claimed Garvey had made these radical remarks. After reading part of Davidson’s report Cantor

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ D. Davidson, “In RE: Marcus Garvey, Negro Agitator,” Bureau of Investigation Reports, New York City [Made] Dec. 5th, 1918. [for the period of] Dec. 2nd [1918], National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 329359. Typed document. Stamped endorsement. Copy of report furnished to Special Agent Finch, in Hill, 1:305-08.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

stated that the statements were substantially correct in tenor, but would not say that they were the exact words used by Garvey.²⁶⁵

Finch's report also included an interview with Ralph A. Jeffreys, an employee of the Palace Casino, where Garvey spoke on December 1, 1918, in which he stated that Garvey claimed the next war would be between the Negro and White man and that with Japan's help the Negro would win.²⁶⁶ Garvey allegedly reiterated his previous call to lynch a white man in the North for every Negro lynched in the South. Jeffreys also said that before the meeting while standing next to Garvey, Garvey told some thirty or forty people around him in the hall, "That parents should learn the children to save their pennies up and to learn to use fire-arms so that when the time came they would be able to go to war against the Whites."²⁶⁷ These alleged statements border sedition and gave the bureau all the more reason to target Garvey.

Under orders from Special Agent Finch Davidson attempted to apprehend Garvey at the *Negro World* office, but Garvey was speaking in Baltimore.²⁶⁸ In a report from Major W.H. Loving to the Director of the Military Intelligence Division on January 6, 1919, Loving summarized Garvey's alleged statements regarding the next war being a race war, and concluded: "These remarks, if Mr. Garvey had made them less than three months ago, would have been declared seditious. If by signing the armistice these remarks are not considered seditious now, it is imperative that Mr. Garvey's activities should be closely watched until the

²⁶⁵ R.W. Finch, "In RE: Negro Agitation, Marcus Garvey," New York City [*Made*] in Dec. 3, 1918. [*for the period of*] Dec. 3 [1918], National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 329359, Typed document, Carbon copy, in Hill, 1:309-10.

²⁶⁶ R.W. Finch, "In RE: Negro Agitation, Marcus Garvey," New York City [*Made*] in Dec. 3, 1918. [*for the period of*] Dec. 3 [1918], National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 329359, Typed document, Stamped endorsement, in Hill, 1:310-12.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁸ "Bureau of Investigation Reports," New York City [*Made*] Dec. 13th 1918. [*for the period of*] Dec. 9th [1918], National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 329359, Typed document, Copy of report furnished to Special Agent Finch, in Hill, 1:317.

terms of peace are signed.”²⁶⁹ The reports of Garvey’s allegedly seditious remarks caused the Bureau and the United States government to increase their monitoring of him and escalate their campaign to get rid of him. In reports made on February 24 and 26, 1919, the Department of State asserted that “the object of [the “Negro World’] appears to be to incite racial hatred, and is very possibly supported by German or Bolshevist money.”²⁷⁰

3.7 Conclusion

The racial violence in the United States during and following the war was a catalyst for Garvey’s transformation into a nationalist champion of his race, as he blamed organized labor for the riots and began to give up on racial cooperation as a means to uplifting blacks from poverty. Garvey argued that since the conflict was racial, not economic, that it could not be resolved through the state. By the end of the war, his disappointment with the inequality of African Americans within white institutions, including the labor movement and the United States military, became so great that he started to believe that racial cooperation could only be achieved through black power and autonomy and that the freedom of action and opportunity could only be achieved by his race after they embraced international trends and established an imperial power of their own.

²⁶⁹ Maj. W. H. Loving to the Director, Military Intelligence Division, Washington D.C., January 6, 1919, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department General and Special staffs, records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-261/23 2-1 273X(50), Typed document signed, Recipient’s copy, in Hill, 1:340-41.

²⁷⁰ Colville Barclay, Charge d’ Affaires Ad Interim, British Embassy, to William Phillips, Asst. Secretary of State, National Archives, Washington, D.C., General Records of the Department of State, records of the post-1906 period, decimal file, records of the Office of the Counselor, File 800.9, Typed letter signed, Recipient’s copy, Endorsement is handwritten, Washington, D.C., February 24, 1919, in Hill, Vol.1, 371-72; L. Lanier Winslow, Counselor, Department of State, to W.E. Allen, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 185161, Typed letter signed, Recipient’s copy, Washington, D.C., February 26, 1919, in Hill, 1:372-73.

Although frustrated with labor institutions in the United States, and even as his program became more racial, advocating for black commercial and industrial success, the class appeal of Garvey's propaganda was still very much a large part of his ideology at the end of the war. The success of the Bolsheviks convinced many that better and quicker results could be achieved through revolution rather than the often tedious process of social reform, causing many governments concern. The United States began to monitor organizations that they believed might have leftist ideals and the class appeal of Garvey's propaganda concerned the United States government as much as the racial element of his program. Convinced that Garvey was openly advocating Bolshevism, J. Edgar Hoover was admittedly watching him closely, waiting for him to break a federal law so that he could be deported. The Justice Department's surveillance and infiltration of the UNIA could only have added to Garvey's feelings of anxiety that his enemies were out to get him.

Garvey's determination to combat criticism impacted his often vindictive responses to dissention from colleagues. The suspicions of United States officials, brought on by the Red Scare and race riots of 1919, led to increased surveillance of Garvey and the company that he kept. Aware that his associates in the black American left were being watched, particularly those close to Garvey, he began finding excuses to distance himself from a number of them. Domingo would be the first of many associates of Garvey in the black American left who would find themselves being ostracized at the first sign of conflict after 1919.

Frustrated with the racial inequality of labor organizations, the United States military and government, and leftist class-focused organizations, and enraged by the United States government's refusal to protect black Americans from lynching and violence, Garvey would later write that the difference between the UNIA and other movements in the United States is that

the UNIA “seeks independence of existing government, while the other organizations seek to make the Negro a secondary part of existing governments.”²⁷¹ By 1919, Garvey was concerned with organizing mass black power independent of the American system, and leadership and the program were to come exclusively from the UNIA, with its demands backed by international race unity. Garvey’s determination to organize mass power and racial unity through the leadership of the UNIA led him to call for a massive world convention of international Negroes to be held in August 1920.

²⁷¹ Garvey, *Philosophy and Opinions*, vol. 2, p. 97.

CHAPTER 4: THE END OF THE GARVEY MOVEMENT'S FORMATIVE YEARS (MARCH 1919 – AUGUST 1920)

Despite the fact that Garvey's popularity continued to grow, the number of his critics and dissenters increased as well. Garvey launched personal attacks against his enemies in the pages of the *Negro World*, refuting allegations of fraud and misconduct and launching libel suits. An assassination attempt verified Garvey's worst fears about the degree of his enemies' determination to block his success. Although the assassin was an angry investor who believed that Garvey had swindled him, Garvey seemed convinced that his critics had plotted his assassination. The fact that the man committed suicide in jail could only have added to Garvey's suspicions that there was a conspiracy among his enemies to "get him." By the UNIA's First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in August 1920 Garvey had distanced himself from a number of people he considered his enemies, many of them in the black American left.

During the year and a half leading up to the UNIA's convention the United States Department of Justice expanded its investigation of Garvey, believing him to be one of the most radical, dangerous black leaders. The federal government's increasing concern with socialist and leftist groups, and their conviction that Garvey and his movement were closely tied with Bolsheviks, led them to put J. Edgar Hoover, the controversial future director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in charge of figuring out a way to bring deportation proceedings against Garvey. Hoover assigned undercover agents to pose as UNIA sympathizers, reporting on Garvey's speeches and meetings and gathering evidence. These reports provide evidence of the evolving nature of the class appeal of Garvey's propaganda leading up to the convention.

While Garvey's movement was evolving into a program for racial autonomy, this chapter demonstrates that the class appeal of his propaganda remained a significant component to the ideology of the movement throughout the convention. Garvey's growing success was accompanied by an increasing number of critics, a heightened government campaign against him, as well as an assassination attempt on his life. Garvey's suspicions that his "enemies" were out to get him, coupled with the Red Scare of 1919, were becoming seemingly justified, making him all the more determined to combat them.

4.1 Class Appeal of Garvey's Propaganda

As Garvey became increasingly pessimistic about the prospects of blacks working within existing American institutions, cultural nationalism, black autonomy and economic independence became the focus of his program. Preparing for what he considered to be the impending race war, Garvey saw racial separation, self-reliance and accumulation of capital and resources as crucial elements needed to strengthen Africa, which would eventually be able to compete with the white nations of power. Garvey believed a race war likely because he anticipated an inevitable battle to control resources between Asia and Europe. Garvey reported that Japan and China were working together to represent the "races who are discriminated against in the world" at the Paris Peace Conference. Unless there was an end to colonialism he suggested that blacks choose the side that offered their liberty.²⁷²

Already vindictive to critics, Garvey began branding black leaders who did not think in racial terms as weak.²⁷³ Concerned that differences over economic theory would compromise

²⁷² Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, November 30, 1918, in Hill, 1:302-305.

²⁷³ Martin, 24.

racial unity, Garvey became a vocal foe of leftist movements in the United States in the 1920s. However, prior to the 1920 Convention, his propaganda continued to appeal to the class struggle and many of Garvey's closest associates were socialists and leftists, namely the editors of his journal, including W.A. Domingo, Hubert Harrison and William Bridges. Hence, Garvey's journal, the *Negro World*, served as a mouthpiece to socialist and leftist ideals.

On March 29, 1919, Garvey wrote an editorial addressing the Bolshevists' activities, praising Russia for issuing "a proclamation of sympathy and good will towards the laboring peoples of the world."²⁷⁴ Garvey saw these efforts as evidence of the impending "revolution among the whites," since they would continue to kill themselves until the masses were free.²⁷⁵ However, Garvey attested that he was not as concerned with partaking in these revolutions as with the "destruction that will come out of the bloody conflict between capital and labor, which will give us a breathing space to then declare our freedom from the tyrannical rule of oppressive over-lords."²⁷⁶ Garvey saw Bolshevism as a white institution with limited direct benefit to blacks: "Bolshevism, it would appear, is a thing of the white man's making, and whatever it means is apparent, it is going to spread until it finds a haven in the breasts of all oppressed peoples, and then there shall be a universal rule of the masses."²⁷⁷

Garvey acknowledged the "growing misunderstanding" regarding the political affiliation and sympathy of the UNIA, clarifying that "this organization has absolutely no association with any political party. We do not accept money from politicians, nor political parties."²⁷⁸ Garvey

²⁷⁴ Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, Saturday, March 29, 1919, original headlines have been omitted, in Hill, 1:391-92.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Marcus Garvey, "Extraordinary Announcement for Everybody. All Politicians Should Take Notice," *Negro World*, Saturday, July 19, 1919, in Hill, 1:466-67.

attested that “Republicans, Democrats and Socialists are the same to us – they are all white men, and to our knowledge, all of them join together and lynch and burn Negroes.” In *American Socialism and Black Americans*, Philip S. Foner points out that Garvey possibly felt that the clarification was necessary as a result of his break with Domingo, former editor of the *Negro World* and prominent Socialist.²⁷⁹ Referencing a New York Times article from a few days earlier characterizing Garvey’s movement as led by the Bolshevists and the I.W.W., Garvey clarified that “the new negro need no other leadership but his own,” and that “we are neither Democrats nor Republicans nor Socialists nor Bolshevists nor I.W.W.’s, because...all of them are white men, and when they were robbing us from Africa, they robbed us with all parties...”²⁸⁰

Although Garvey claimed that his organization was non-political, he continued to publish articles in the *Negro World* that demonstrated that class consciousness remained an integral component of his propaganda. In an editorial on October 25, 1919, Arthur Bishop praised Claude McKay’s defense of Bolshevism and radicalism in the previous issue, claiming that World War I was “the direct result of capitalist greed,” and attested that he had “come to the conclusion that capitalism is bad, unconscionably, irredeemable bad. Like a hug[e] python, it has wound itself round and round its victim, the working man, who has always been at its mercy.”²⁸¹ However, Garvey was aware of the emerging post-war commercial and industrial age where “every race of mankind was endeavoring to strike out independently for their own development.”²⁸² Garvey

²⁷⁹ Philip S. Foner, *American Socialism and Black Americans*, 307-09.

²⁸⁰ UNIA Meeting at Carnegie Hall, New York (State) Legislature, Joint Legislature Committee to Investigate Seditious Activities (Lusk Committee) Papers, Part One, Box 4, Investigations File 1, New York, August 25, 1919, in Hill, 1:506.

²⁸¹ Arthur Bishop, *Negro World*, October 25, 1919, Original headlines omitted, New York, Sept. 22, 1919, in Hill, 2:21.

²⁸² *Negro World*, October 11, 1919, Original headlines omitted, Pittsburg, Pa., September 26, 1919, in Hill, 2:27-29.

saw other races of the world actively engaging in commerce and industry, preparing for a commercial rivalry “never planned nor experienced before,” and he believed that no mercy would be shown to weaker nationalities of the world. Therefore, he saw the end of the exploitation of Africa’s resources, the reclaiming of those resources for the black race, and the use of black collective knowledge and skills as the way that his people would compete and thrive in the future.

Disappointed and frustrated with the racial discrimination faced by black soldiers returning home from war, Garvey suggested that black men refuse to fight in another white man’s war if they continued to lynch and mob Negroes.²⁸³ Garvey claimed that all races were looking out for their own in the postwar era and that the Negro should look out for himself, blaming capitalistic greed for this divide: “White and yellow men have become more selfish today than they were before causing the terrible war, the terrible conflict, of 1914 to 1918. They destroyed all that they spent years and years to build...They have, therefore, lost their sympathies for other men....During this selfish, soulless age it falls to the province of the Negro to take the initiative and do for himself; otherwise he is going to die.”²⁸⁴ In a newspaper report printed in the *New York Call* on April 27, 1919, the UNIA, recognized “according to its president-general, Marcus Garvey, that this is a ‘selfish age,’” announced that it would “hold a mass meeting...to prove the Negro has caught the spirit.”²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, October 11, 1919; reprinted in the *Emancipator*, March 27, 1920, Original headlines have been omitted, Chicago, Ill., October 1, 1919, in Hill, 2:41-43.

²⁸⁴ Marcus Garvey, “Hon. Marcus Garvey, Foremost Orator of the Race, Delivers Brilliant Speech in Philadelphia,” *Negro World*, November 1, 1919, Original headlines abbreviated, Philadelphia, Pa., Oct. 21, 1919, in Hill, 2:89-98.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

Garvey became disillusioned with American liberal institutions' ability or desire to uplift the Negro race: "I want you to realize that this America, the greatest democracy in the world for white men,...is becoming more prejudiced every day against the Negro...If you think that the white man is going to be more liberal to Negroes than they are at present, you are making a big mistake." According to Garvey, economic independence for his race was the best way to deal with the problems that industrial development created during the postwar era. Black soldiers returning from war had to compete for many of the same jobs with their white comrades and for this reason Garvey sought to create industrial work for Negroes. However, there was still a class consciousness to Garvey's propaganda, as he blamed the "so-called big Negroes," who did not belong to "the other class of Negroes," for keeping the race back. Garvey claimed that men become noble through service not material wealth.

As his program evolved into one that embraced black nationalism and autonomy, Garvey's propaganda became increasingly militaristic. He claimed that since white power was maintained by brute force that Negroes must organize their large numbers to take up arms and be willing to die to make Africa a free and independent republic of the world.²⁸⁶ Despite the irony that Social Darwinism was used to justify the racial hierarchy of the period, Garvey embraced the theory and acknowledged the significance of the phrases "Struggle for Existence" and "The Survival of the Fittest," commenting that if the Negro became economically self-sustaining and became a factor in the commercial and industrial world, he would "not only gain some of the good the things of this world, but will also gain prestige and standing."²⁸⁷ Garvey believed that the UNIA's industrial efforts such as the Black Star line and the Negro Factories Corporation

²⁸⁶ Report of UNIA Meeting, *Negro World*, March 13, 1920, in Hill, 2:241-59.

²⁸⁷ Marcus Garvey, "The Drive to Launch the Third Ship of the Black Star Line," *Negro World*, May 8, 1920, Original headlines abbreviated, Philadelphia, Pa., May 3, 1920, in Hill, 2:330-31.

would enable blacks to “successfully stand the struggle for existence and to become fit to survive industrially.”

In an article printed in the *Baltimore Observer* in May 1920, Garvey is quoted as claiming that “battle cruisers, submarines, battleships, airships and aeroplanes are to be built,” and that “when the World War starts up again the black man will take his place and fight his own battles.”²⁸⁸ As to whom they would fight, Garvey is reported to have said, “Why we will fight anybody who wants to fight.”²⁸⁹ Although this source reveals the increasingly culturally nationalistic approach that Garvey was embracing in his propaganda, the article also praises Garvey for gaining the support of working class Negroes, rather than the elite. Even as Garvey’s greatest capitalist venture, the Black Star Line, was becoming a reality, the advertisements were aimed at the working class, attesting that while “it costs a small fortune for the poor workingman to take his family” to a crowded resort or Coney Island, the price of these daily trips up the Hudson are “placed within the reach of every one.”²⁹⁰ These cruises were for the “poor tire[d] working man” who can’t escape the heat after a long day of work.

4.2 A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen

In the years leading up to the Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in August 1920, Garvey’s list of “enemies” continued to grow, many of them socialists and leftists. As Garvey’s propaganda began to demonstrate his growing interest in black nationalism and pan-Africanism, A. Philip Randolph was becoming the spokesperson for the socialist/labor/leftist

²⁸⁸ “Marcus Declares Himself,” *Baltimore Observer*, May 1920, in Hill, 2:343-44.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ “Shadyside is to Make Daily Trips up the Hudson River,” advertisement, *Negro World*, July 17, 1920, in Hill, 2:427.

approach to racial injustice in the United States. Although Randolph would become one of Garvey's fiercest critics, the two actively collaborated from 1916 to 1919.²⁹¹ Along with Chandler Owen, Randolph founded the Brotherhood of Labor and the *Messenger* magazine, which was partly financed by the Socialist party. When the magazine advocated opposition to the First World War, the Department of Justice launched an investigation into the two men, arrested them in August 1918 and charged them with violating the Espionage Act.²⁹² Randolph and Owen would be closely monitored by the Department of Justice for the rest of their lives.

Like Garvey, Randolph attempted to confront the fact that American labor unions and the American Federation of Labor discriminated against blacks. Contrary to his usual integrationist approach to race relations, Randolph concentrated his efforts into organizing black unions. Randolph was one of the first to introduce Garvey to Harlem audiences. Although Garvey's "race first" ideology was often at odds with Randolph's socialism, the two men joined forces on January 2, 1919, to create a new Pan-African organization to represent African interests at the Paris Peace Conference. The two men, along with anti-lynching crusader Ida Wells-Barnett, had previously staged a forum in November, 1918, where they discussed issues surrounding former German African colonies. The UNIA selected Randolph and Wells-Barnett to represent it at the Peace Conference, although their visas would be denied by the United States government.

Chandler Owen would also become one of Garvey's fiercest critics, launching the first of several attacks on Garvey's organization, which escalated into the "Garvey Must Go" campaign.²⁹³ By the Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in August 1920, Randolph and Owen were afraid that if Garvey was successful he would set back the Socialist movement

²⁹¹ Marable, 113.

²⁹² Hill, 1:307-308.

²⁹³ Hill, 1:220-21.

among blacks: “We don’t believe in the cry of the Garvey gang – ‘Africa for the Africans,’ no more than we accept the cry of America for the Americans. We are not nationalist but internationalists. And when the world is Socialized the negro and white will be equal in all countries...To nationalize the negro would have only one effect – that of crystalizing more strongly against him the white world’s feeling of inequality.”²⁹⁴ Randolph and Owen failed to see why the Bureau believed Garvey was working with the Bolsheviks since he had made no effort to study the Socialist movement headed by them.²⁹⁵ Randolph and Owen were beginning to see Garvey as a menace, diverting newly radicalized blacks from organized labor and toward “pipedreams” of Africa. They mistakenly interpreted Garvey’s actions to suggest that he was a tool for whites and capitalists. By the UNIA’s convention, two of the black American left’s most prominent leaders had become Garvey’s most vocal critics.

4.3 Hubert Harrison

Like Randolph and Owen, Hubert Harrison saw socialism as the answer to the race problem in the United States, and like Randolph, Owen and Garvey he condemned the racial discrimination of the Socialist Party of America, severing his ties in 1914. He then focused on advocating a “Race First” ideology, which Garvey would eventually adopt, that focused on racial rather than class oppression. Harrison believed his Liberty League of Harlem was the prototype of the UNIA, which Garvey created in its image.²⁹⁶ Many of Harrison’s former supporters joined the UNIA by 1919, and Garvey appointed him associate editor of the *Negro World* in January

²⁹⁴ Interview with Chandler Owen and A. Philip Randolph by Charles Mowbray White, New York Public Library, New York, National Civic Federation Papers, *NN*, “The Negro,” box 152, Typed document, draft copy, Corrections are handwritten, and portions are underlined for emphasis, Manhattan, August 20, 1920.

²⁹⁵ “The Garvey Movement: A Promise or a Menace to Negroes?” *Messenger* 2, October 1920, 114-15, in Hill, 2:611.

²⁹⁶ Perry, *Hubert Harrison Reader*, 196-197.

1920. Harrison held the position for a year, as well as commissioner of education in the UNIA, influencing the racial consciousness that was becoming a key element to the program.²⁹⁷ The major difference between black Socialists or “leftists” and the “race first” school of thought is that the former believed trade unionism to be the best way for blacks to achieve racial power while the latter saw black business as the key. These differences were not of great significance, however, as Randolph and Owen were not working-class organizers, despite their working class ideology, and Harrison spoke to workers as well as businessmen and endorsed the IWW, and cooperation and friendly competition between the two schools of thought was common.²⁹⁸

Although he held high ranking positions in the UNIA and *Negro World*, Harrison was critical of Garvey and their relationship deteriorated by the UNIA Convention. While he remained critical of Garvey, Harrison continued to write for the paper for two years after the convention. The difference between Harrison and many of those in the black American left whom Garvey considered enemies by the convention was his “race first” school of thought.

4.4 W.A. Domingo

Garvey’s suspicion that his enemies were determined to stop him could only have been justified by the increasing number of associates and members of the UNIA who were becoming his fiercest critics. W.A. Domingo was the first editor of the *Negro World* until he resigned from his position in July 1919.²⁹⁹ Domingo claimed that in the eleven months that he edited the *Negro World* Garvey had become dissatisfied because Domingo did not boost his ideas and, instead,

²⁹⁷ “Brief History of the Life and Work of Hubert Harrison,” WPA Writer’s Program, “Negroes of New York,” 1939; Joel A. Rogers, *The World’s Great Men of Color*, vol. 2, New York: n.p., 1943, 611-19 in Hill, 1:210-211.

²⁹⁸ Stein, 47-48.

²⁹⁹ Withdrawal by W.A. Domingo from the *Negro World*, original headline omitted, *Messenger* 2, September 1919, 32, in Hill, 2:40.

Garvey would write a front page article that better reflected his own propaganda.³⁰⁰ Domingo claimed that the reason he was “tried” before the executive committee of the UNIA was that there was “so much variance” in their views on the character of the propaganda, and that his editorials were not “keeping with the programme [Garvey] had outlined.”³⁰¹

Since Garvey had given him permission to write whatever he chose, Domingo used the *Negro World* to endorse a socialist agenda. When the Lusk Committee seized the manuscript of Domingo’s projected pamphlet, *Socialism Imperilled*, in a raid on the Rand School on June 21, 1919, Garvey responded by having Domingo “tried” before the UNIA’s executive committee, charging him with publishing editorials that were not in keeping with the UNIA program.³⁰²

Garvey’s anxiety about the government’s campaign to curb his efforts and deport him could have only added to his sudden desire to distance himself from socialist associates. He does not appear to have been concerned with the socialist appeal of his newspaper until the government targeted him and his editor for the nature of his propaganda. After splitting with Garvey, Domingo reconnected with Randolph and Owen, becoming a contributing editor of the *Messenger*, and teamed up with Richard B. Moore to publish the *Emancipator*, a short-lived weekly socialist newspaper that mainly criticized Garvey and the finances of the BSL.³⁰³

A report of a UNIA meeting, printed in the *Negro World* on March 6, 1920, described a personal attack by Professor B. C. Buck from earlier that day.³⁰⁴ Garvey removed Fred D. Powell and Buck from the UNIA and BSL, and printed a notice in the *Negro World* the same day,

³⁰⁰ W.A. Domingo, “Mr. W.A. Domingo’s Connection with the UNIA,” *Gleaner*, June 15, 1925, in Hill, 2:40.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Hill, 1:529.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ “Report of UNIA Meeting,” *Negro World*, March 6, 1920, in Hill, 2:230-38.

warning members not to send them any money intended for those corporations.³⁰⁵ In March 1920, the *Emancipator* printed a correspondence between Cyril Briggs and the Register of British Shipping, which showed that until March 15, 1920, the BSL did not own the *SS Yarmouth*, the first ship purchased by the shipping line, although they had been claiming ownership for four or five months.³⁰⁶ They claimed that Buck and Powell had known this fact and that was why they were dismissed from any connection with Garvey's enterprises. Garvey and the BSL responded by filing a suit against Domingo and New Negro Publishing Company for libel.³⁰⁷ Establishing a solid reputation was crucial to the success of Garvey's organizations, and he was determined to convince potential investors that his critics were lying about him and the BSL's ownership of the *Yarmouth*.

By June 1919, Garvey was preparing for "battle" with the "enemies of the cause," many of them socialists, whom he described as "political grafters and conscienceless crooks" who were "trying to gain control over the sentiment" of African Americans "for the purpose of exploiting and robbing them of their hard earned mites."³⁰⁸ Garvey took credit for his organization's role in curbing his enemies' efforts and attributed the bureau's investigation of him to the fact that "these robbers and 'white men's niggers' have gone to white men to lie about us so as to have our cause interfered with." Garvey claimed that these "crooks" had falsely reported to police and the State Attorney of New York that he was manufacturing and distributing bombs, and that the police had quickly realized the "manufactured lie."³⁰⁹ He

³⁰⁵ "UNIA Notice," *Negro World*, March 13, 1920, in Hill, 2:261.

³⁰⁶ "British Official Declare *Yarmouth* is Not Owned by Black Star Company," *New York News*, March 25, 1920, in Hill, 2:267-69.

³⁰⁷ Hill, 2:lii.

³⁰⁸ Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, Saturday, June 14, 1919, in Hill, 1:415-16.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

promised to publish the names of these “traitors” in the *Negro World* in “bold black type” in the next few weeks so that the “world might know them.” He also began taking a hard line against associates with socialist or leftist ties, fearing government retaliation.

However, Garvey had not yet adopted the hard nationalistic line that would eventually become a key component to his propaganda. In a *Negro World* editorial on June 14, 1919, he mentioned the rising number of public speakers in New York, calling some “ignorant, irresponsible and mercenary individuals” whose discussions of the West Indian and American question “along purely nationalistic lines” were a testament to the “intellectual impoverishment of those speakers.”³¹⁰ Garvey suggested that “perhaps the Negro speakers who indulge in this race-disrupting pastime are merely rendering service for wages already received...” He reminded these speakers of “the old Roman maxim which was used by the Caesars and is today being so efficiently used by Great Britain in order to solidify imperialism upon various and diverse national groups: ‘Divide and rule,’” suggesting he believed that breaking into sectional groups would leave them incapable of uplifting the race.³¹¹

4.5 William Bridges

Another key socialist associate who split from Garvey was Williams Bridges, who had joined the Socialist party’s People’s Educational Forum in 1917.³¹² According to Garvey, while away on a lecture tour several “traitors of the race plotted to use the office of the District Attorney of New York to intimidate and scare the officers of the association left behind.”³¹³

³¹⁰ “Divide and Rule,” *Negro World*, Saturday, June 14, 1919, in Hill, 1:423-24.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Hill, 1:429-31.

³¹³ Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, Saturday, June 21, 1919, in Hill, 1:429-31.

Garvey attested that when he and several officers met with the DA they were “confronted by four Negro traitors (stool pigeons)” who had gone to the DA with false information. Failing to find anything to charge them with, Garvey and his associates were dismissed, counting the incident as a “victory over the four traitors, William Bridges and their accomplices, whose names will be published in bold black type in the next issue of *The Negro World*.”³¹⁴ Garvey also promised to exhibit those names at the Palace Casino “so that every member of the race may know the Benedict Arnolds of our cause.” Garvey explained the nature of his vindictive actions: “Some people take ten years to get even with their enemies. [The UNIA] is prepared to wait one hundred years, but the next world war is not so far distant – Negroes of the world, prepare.”³¹⁵ Garvey publicly challenged Bridges to a debate, which Bridges surprisingly accepted.

The following week the *Negro World* reported on the debate in an article entitled, “William Bridges, Stepladder Agitator on Lenox Ave., Chased Off Avenue as Traitor to Race,” attesting that a nervous Bridges claimed Garvey had robbed the people and that he would be indicted by the DA.³¹⁶ The following evening Garvey delivered a speech, speaking of efforts being made by his enemies to discredit both himself and the organization, specifically naming William Bridges and the debate, which Garvey arrogantly referred to as a “complete and inglorious defeat of his opponent.”³¹⁷ Garvey described these men as “a cabal of envious and malicious individuals,” and viciously condemned them as “white man’s niggers” and “cowards.”

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ “William Bridges, Stepladder Agitator on Lenox Ave., Chased Off Avenue as Traitor to Race,” *Negro World*, Saturday, June 21, 1919, in Hill, 1:434-36.

³¹⁷ “Address by Marcus Garvey at the Palace Casino,” *Negro World*, Saturday, June 21, 1919, in Hill, 1:437-39.

Garvey attested that “if any one...expected to see a trembling, cowardly Negro that evening, that one was mistaken, for...all fear had departed from his heart and he was determined that no power on earth, whether it was a district attorney or a group of envious little Negro traitors and conspirators, could prevent the [UNIA] from carrying its objects to a successful conclusion.”³¹⁸ Garvey claimed that he had appeared that evening for the purpose of “vindicating his personal honor and the honor of the association he was representing.” He was determined to prove himself a noble leader and would incessantly defend his honor and reputation. This character trait impacted his relationship with a growing number of black American leftists, many of whom had become his most vocal critics. When the Department of Justice pursued Domingo, the editor of his newspaper, for his ties to socialism, Garvey began to distance his program from the left. As an alien, Garvey was especially concerned about being deported, and the fact that Randolph, Owen, Harrison and Bridges had joined Garvey’s list of “enemies” by this time also impacted his relationship with the black American left.

4.6 Libel Suits

In addition to the aforementioned defections Garvey found himself increasingly involved in legal battles with critics and dissenters. As his number of “enemies” grew so did Garvey’s vindictiveness and determination to defeat them. Three days after being questioned by New York Assistant DA Edwin P. Kilroe about financial aspects of the BSL the *World* printed an article claiming that Kilroe instructed Garvey to refrain from collecting any more funds for the BSL.³¹⁹ True to form and determined to clear his name Garvey delivered a speech in which he threatened

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ “District Attorney Sinks ‘The Black Star Line.’ Head of Negro Steamship Project Promises Not to Collect Any More Funds,” *World*, Thursday, June 19, 1919, in Hill, 1:431.

to sue the *World* for libel.³²⁰ He then printed a circular that challenged the DA, “the lying New York World and the negro traitors,” daring them “to stop the inaugurating: of the BSL.”³²¹

Seemingly undeterred by the accusations of libel against them by Garvey the *World* reported two days later that Garvey was mismanaging funds and collecting money under false pretenses.³²² On

August 28, 1919, Garvey was charged with criminal libel against Kilroe and pled not guilty.³²³

These indictments would be the first of many libel suits filed by and against Garvey over the next several years.

In September 1919, the *Chicago Defender* published an article that was critical of Garvey, who responded by filing libel suits.³²⁴ The newspaper countered by bringing libel action against Garvey.³²⁵ True to his vindictive nature, Garvey delivered a speech and printed it in the *Negro World*, pointing out that the *Defender* was now facing charges after libeling him and the BSL. In February 1920, he threatened to sue the New York *Amsterdam News* and *Chicago Defender* each for \$20,000 in damages to make a retraction and “chew up their words or face law,” after they suggested that the BSL explain its financial operations.³²⁶ In March 1920, the BSL filed a suit against George W. Harris and New York Publishing Company for libel and the

³²⁰ *World News Memorandum*, Butler Library, Columbia University, *World*, Typed note, Carbon copy, New York, June 22, 1919, in Hill, 1:440.

³²¹ *World News Report*, Butler Library, Columbia University, *World*, Typed manuscript signed, Insertions and endorsements are handwritten, New York, June 22, 1919, in Hill, 1:439-40.

³²² Memorandum by Edward O’Toole of the *World*, Butler Library, Columbia University, *World*, Typed manuscript signed, Carbon Copy, New York City, June 30, 1919, in Hill, 1:451-52.

³²³ *The People of the State of New York v. Marcus Garvey, People v. Garvey*, no. 126535, Ct. Spec. Sess., N.Y. County Ct., August 9, 1920, Typed document signed, City Magistrates’ Court, Borough of Manhattan, Second Dist. New York, August 28, 1919, in Hill, 2:4-7; Hill, 2:xlix.

³²⁴ “Weekly Comment,” *Chicago Defender*, September 6, 1919, in Hill, 2:14.

³²⁵ British Military Intelligence Report, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 10218-364/7, Typed document, transcript, Transmitted in Maj. H.A. Strauss to the director of the Military Intelligence Division, October 17, 1919, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 10218-364/8, New York, September 27, 1919, in Hill, 2:30-33.

³²⁶ “Amsterdam News Makes Amends,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 20, 1920, reprinted in *Negro World*, March 13, 1920, in Hill, 2:215.

Amsterdam News retracted their statements.³²⁷ On March 27, 1920, the *Emancipator* launched an investigation of Garvey and the BSL, and printed a five part series on the history of Garvey by Anselmo R. Jackson.³²⁸ Jackson reported that Garvey had received considerable assistance for his program from “the very element of Jamaicans he would have been forced to oppose had he attempted to ameliorate the social, political and economic conditions of the most unfortunate of the natives.”³²⁹ Jackson incorrectly suggested that Garvey’s Jamaican program did not engage the island’s class struggle and deemed it a failure. Garvey again chose to deal with his critics by publicly addressing them at a meeting on “Enemies of His Organization” the next day.³³⁰

Undeterred by Garvey’s rebuttal, the *Emancipator* continued to print critical articles on Garvey throughout the next few weeks. The attacks were fierce and personal, claiming Garvey’s peculiarly shaped head was the “German type” and that his temperament and racial philosophy were not unlike the temperament or racial philosophy of Germans,³³¹ and comparing faith in Garvey and his programs to “religious doctrines acquired and maintained by unreasoning belief rather than by enlightened examination.”³³² They claimed Garveyites were “lunatics who were obsessed with contrary notions and incredible illusions” and that “Garvey’s peculiar psychology is responsible for the unreasoning and intensely racial state of his blind followers’ minds.”³³³ Garvey sued the editor of the *Emancipator*, Domingo and the New Negro Publishing Co. for

³²⁷ Hill, 2:lii.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Anselmo R. Jackson, “Analysis of the Black Star Line by Anselmo R. Jackson,” *Emancipator*, March 27, 1920, in Hill, 2:271-72.

³³⁰ Hill, 2:lii.

³³¹ Anselmo R. Jackson, “Analysis of the Black Star Line by Anselmo R. Jackson,” *Emancipator*, April 3, 1920, in Hill, 2:272-74.

³³² Anselmo R. Jackson, “Analysis of the Black Star Line by Anselmo R. Jackson,” *Emancipator*, April 17, 1920, in Hill, 2:276-78.

³³³ Anselmo R. Jackson, “Analysis of the Black Star Line by Anselmo R. Jackson,” *Emancipator*, April 24, 1920, in Hill, 2:278-79.

\$400,000.³³⁴ Cyril Briggs responded with a series of articles standing by the earlier charges made against Garvey by the *Emancipator*. Briggs claimed Garvey abused facts and that the BSL did not own their ship the *Yarmouth* as early as they had stated.³³⁵ In response, Garvey assured readers and investors that these reports and rumors were “false accusations by several unscrupulous persons” and requested the named of these people.³³⁶

Garvey iconography was often troubling, as he treated criticism with malice and vindictiveness, and many of his dissenters responded accordingly. Many of the libel suits began with newspapers simply questioning the financial aspects of Garvey’s projects, yet turned into a series of furious attacks after Garvey’s combative responses. This series of legal action demonstrates the toxic nature of Garvey’s relationship with those who disagreed with elements of his program, and impacted his decision to take a hard stance against critics and dissenters.

4.7 Assassination Attempt

In the years 1919 and 1920, several major events occurred in Garvey’s personal life that likely impacted his ideological and intellectual transformation. On October 14, 1919, Garvey was shot and wounded in an assassination attempt by George Tyler. Five days after the attempt on his life Garvey delivered a speech denying claims that he owed the assassin money: “He was one of those bad members [of the UNIA] that the others had to expel...It would appear that some of our enemies got hold of this man and tried to make capital out of him.”³³⁷ Garvey insisted that

³³⁴ *Emancipator*, April 3, 1920, Original headline omitted, in Hill, Vol.2, 284.

³³⁵ Cyril V. Briggs, “*Yarmouth* Granted Change of Registry Since Oct. 2, 1919. Official Document Refutes Childish and Clumsy Explanation of Marcus Garvey,” *Emancipator*, April 10, 1920, Original headlines omitted, in Hill, 2:286-89.

³³⁶ BSL Notice, *Negro World*, May 1, 1920, in Hill, 2:321.

³³⁷ “Speech by Marcus Garvey,” Philadelphia, Pa., October 20, 1919, *Negro World*, October 25, 1919, in Hill, 2:85-89.

his enemies were behind the attempt on his life: “So, if you can reason the matter out, you will find out the cause of my having been shot last Tuesday. They knew well I did not borrow any money from that man, but they said that so as to prejudice the minds of the people.”³³⁸

Garvey was not alone in his suspicion that there was a conspiracy behind the assassination attempt. Agent Scully of the Bureau of Investigation, one of those assigned to gather information on Garvey, instructed Agent M.J. Davis to interview Tyler because he believed that there was something more to the affair than simply an owed debt.³³⁹ Tyler allegedly committed suicide in jail before he could be interviewed. Garvey seemed to have expected the assassination attempt, and suggested that he anticipated more attempts on his life: “Last Tuesday I had the first experience of being shot with the intention to kill, for the purpose of defeating the great movement of the [UNIA].”³⁴⁰ He made it clear that he did not hold the assassin accountable for his actions, but was certain that his enemies were behind it: “The would-be assassin... was ‘set up’ to do the ‘job’... The unfortunate creature who acted, I believe, not on his own will, but by the desire of others. Has thrown away his life...”³⁴¹ Although there was no evidence to suggest so, Garvey believed that his many enemies were plotting “all kinds of outrages,” and claimed that the press “tried to make capital out of a lie that the shooting was caused over the dispute of money so as to prejudice the minds of the public.”

Reiterating that he did not owe Tyler money, Garvey attested that the reason for the assassination attempt was that “Tyler fell into the hands of enemies of the [UNIA] because I had

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 329359, Typed document, Stamped endorsement, New York, October 21, 1919, in Hill, 2:89.

³⁴⁰ Marcus Garvey, “Marcus Garvey, Would-Famed Orator and Leader of Universal Movement, Sends Great Message,” Philadelphia, Pa., October 22, 1919, *Negro World*, October 25, 1919, in Hill, 2:99-100.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

caused some politicians to lose their jobs. They doped him and sent him to me.” Garvey’s anxiety likely increased after the attempt on his life, and he began carrying a bodyguard “so that the next person who is ‘hired’ to kill him will receive like punishment.”³⁴² Considering that Garvey was convinced that his enemies were determined to stop him, it is important to acknowledge the impact of an attempt on his life.

4.8 Personal Loss

The second significant event in Garvey’s personal life occurred when less than seven months after they wed Marcus filed a complaint before the Supreme Court of New York against Amy Ashwood Garvey, seeking an annulment of their marriage.³⁴³ Garvey’s vindictiveness is clearly demonstrated in his treatment of his wife when their major troubles began. When Garvey found his wife reading an old letter from her ex-fiancé he “wrenched her arm with brute strength, causing her excruciating pain for several months.” Ashwood claimed Garvey “was and is a person of many moods, whims, and idiosyncrasies and oftentimes would stop speaking to your deponent [Ashwood] and otherwise humiliate and abuse her for the most frivolous and unreasonable cause or pretense, and oftentimes during such spells, the plaintiff would leave deponent’s apartment, stating that he would never return again.”³⁴⁴

The couple’s final break came in April 1920, when Amy Jacques, who had been living with them, moved out of the apartment after a fight with Garvey. Ashwood was pregnant and ill and begged Jacques to return, unaware at the time that an improper relationship existed between

³⁴² Bureau of Investigation Report, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 185161, Typed document, recipient’s copy, New York, N.Y., November 1, 1919, in Hill, 2:142-45.

³⁴³ *Marcus Garvey v. Amy Ashwood Garvey*, no. 24028, New York Supreme Court, Hall of Records, New York, July 15, 1920, in Hill, 2:408-9.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Garvey and Jacques, who would become Garvey's second wife. Despite her feeble condition, Garvey and Ashwood slept in separate rooms, an action that Ashwood described as amounting to "neglect, cruel and inhuman treatment, during deponent's weak and physical condition." This rendered Ashwood "so desperately ill" that her physician "summoned the plaintiff [Garvey] into deponent's [Ashwood's] room and told him that unless he acted differently toward deponent, that he, plaintiff would lose both the deponent and the expected child." Garvey continued to "neglect, mistreat and otherwise inhumanely ignore" Ashwood until he suddenly packed up and abandoned her, sending her into a coma and causing a miscarriage two days later. Ashwood claimed that Garvey rarely called her while she was in the hospital and contributed little towards her expenses.³⁴⁵

Ashwood claimed Garvey had "resorted to every conceivable means and sought every opportunity to belittle, discourage and otherwise humiliate" her. He once told an audience at Liberty Hall that he had no control over his wife and any property which his wife had purchased or might purchase was entirely without his consent. Garvey also moved that Ashwood's request for sick pay be denied on the grounds that Ashwood was "unfinancial." Garvey wrote Ashwood on August 14, 1920, informing her that her father was being held as a stowaway on one of their boats and as soon as the boat arrived he would be turned over to immigration authorities.³⁴⁶

The final major event in Garvey's personal life that occurred between 1919 and 1920 happened when his father passed away on April 9, 1920. His father was an inmate of the St. Ann's Bay Almshouse until December 8, 1919, when a friend and supporter of Garvey removed him. Although Marcus eventually covered his father's funeral expenses, after the inspector of the

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

poor in St. Ann's Bay took out a summons against him to pay for his father's periodic stays in the almshouse between 1916 and 1919, Garvey initially refused, reportedly claiming that "his father had done nothing for him."³⁴⁷ In addition to the death of his father, Garvey went through an assassination attempt, a divorce, and several libel suits. His vindictive and cruel treatment of his wife and father reveal the nature of the personal traits that affected his behavior. The suspicions of American officialdom during the Red Scare fueled Garvey's suspicions that his enemies were determined to stop him, and likely impacted his decision to purge his personal and professional life from those obstacles that stood in the way of his success.

4.9 USA vs. UNIA (April 1919 – August 1920)

By April 1919, the United States government singled out Garvey's movement as an agitation that went "far beyond the redress of the alleged grievances of our negro population," specifically citing Garvey's "intimate relations with various socialist groups throughout the United States" as a primary cause for concern.³⁴⁸ In a report from Capt. John B. Trevor to Brig. Gen. Marlborough Churchill, Trevor claimed that his informant told him that Garvey's organizations looked to Japan for leadership, and "as a radical movement it follows Bolshevism."³⁴⁹ Trevor reported that the topics which most frequently came up in the pages of the *Negro World* and at UNIA meetings were "lynching, the Jim Crow laws, the political status of the n[e]gro, their economic position, and their treatment by labour unions." According to

³⁴⁷ Death Certificate of Marcus Garvey, Sr, Island Record Office, Spanish Town, Jamaica, Printed form with handwritten insertions, April 9, 1920, Public Record Office, London, Colonial Office 137/747, in Hill, 2:285-86; Amy Ashwood Garvey, *Portrait of a Liberator* [unpublished MS], chap. 3.

³⁴⁸ Capt. John B. Trevor to Brig. Gen. Marlborough Churchill, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-324/1 273X(50), Typed document signed, Recipient's copy, New York City, April 5, 1919, in Hill, 1:401-06.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

Trevor the following extract from the *Negro World* illustrates the “encouragement which the negro agitators derived from the Bolshevist and Socialist movements: ‘As you will all realize this is a time of active aggression on the part of the oppressed. In the various theatres of discontent you will see the teeming of millions of unsettled workers agitating for the overthrow of the privileged classes among them. ...[I]t can be seen as plain as daylight that the time of the privileged reactionary is passed and the time for the free man has come...’” Trevor included an extract from the same paper that stated, “on the subject of Africa the only government that believes in freedom for the natives of that continent is that of Bolshevist Russia, which incorporates its belief into its Declaration of Rights.”

Garvey’s association with Domingo, who was still editor of the *Negro World* at the time of the report, concerned Trevor: “The negro agitators have made common cause with the Socialists and have established intimate connections with them. They have a strong socialist organization in Harlem and put up a colored man named [*George*] Fraser Miller at the recent election for Congress. One of his keen supporters was a negro named Domingo... At a meeting to celebrate the first anniversary of the Bolshevik Government, Domingo was introduced as one of the most active workers in the election campaign...” To demonstrate his close alliance with socialists Garvey is quoted as stating that “the only white press in the country that demands negro rights uncompromisingly is composed of radical Socialist newspapers and magazines.” A report from the Bureau of Investigation in April 1919 was entitled “The Negro World: Probable Bolshevik Propaganda.”³⁵⁰ Not only did US officialdom believe that the UNIA’s propaganda

³⁵⁰ “In Re: “The Negro World.” Probable Bolshevik Propaganda,” Bureau of Investigation Reports, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 185161, Typed document, April 15, 1919, in Hill, 1:407.

was aimed primarily at black labor,³⁵¹ they specifically flagged the organization as “advocates of revolution and the Soviet form of government as the only solution of the negro problem.”³⁵²

Garvey was questioned by New York Assistant DA Edwin P. Kilroe about financial aspects of the BSL on June 16, 1919. Ignoring a summons by Kilroe to once again appear before him, Garvey instead printed a circular that dared the DA to “stop the inaugurating” of the BSL.³⁵³ Learning of the circular, Kilroe ordered a group of plain clothes destroyers to dock at the Palace Casino pier that night with the instructions to “sink the ‘Black Star’ fleet if Garvey fires any fund-collecting shells in the direction of the audience.” As the BSL filed for incorporation, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer received a report from Bishop C.S. Smith, stating that, based on a lengthy interview conducted with Garvey three weeks earlier, he was convinced that Garvey was “an adventurer and a grafter, bent on exploiting his people to the utmost limit,” and that “‘The Black Star Line’ project is a fake pure and simple.”³⁵⁴ More damaging to Garvey’s reputation with the United States government was Smith’s assertion that “[Garvey] is in every respect a ‘Red’, according to the sense in which that term is used in the common parlance of the day. He should either be required to discontinue his present vicious propaganda and fake practices or be deported as an undesirable.”

By July 10, 1919, the Bureau of Investigation considered Garvey to be “probably the most prominent Negro agitator in New York,” and named as his associates A. Philip Randolph,

³⁵¹ Rear-Admiral A. P. Niblack to W. E. Allen, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 3057, Typed letter signed, Recipient’s copy, Washington, June 20, 1919, in Hill, 1:432-34.

³⁵² Enclosure, National Archives, Washington, D.C., RG 74, File 34034-951-1000, Typed document signed, Recipient’s copy, New York City, June 14, 1919, in Hill, 1:432-34.

³⁵³ *World News Report*, Butler Library, Columbia University, *World*, Typed manuscript signed, Insertions and endorsements are handwritten, New York, June 22, 1919, in Hill, 1:439-40.

³⁵⁴ Bishop C. S. Smith to A. Mitchell Palmer, Attorney General, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 185161, Typed letter signed, Recipient’s copy, Written on the stationery of the Commission on After-War Problems, Detroit, Mich., June 25, 1919, in Hill, 1:446.

Chandler Owen and George Frasier Miller, whom they associate with the Rand School of New York³⁵⁵ and as publishers of *The Messenger*, both known socialist organs.³⁵⁶ According to a report filed on that day, the Bureau believed that the *Negro World* contained “much favorable comment regarding Soviet rule, and several advertisements of radical meeting.” On July 12, 1919, the Bureau of Investigation requested that the New York division forward all information on Garvey.³⁵⁷ Kilroe began compiling statements from Garvey’s current and former associates with the purpose of presenting them to the New York County grand jury for its investigation of the BSL. In one of these statements Edgar M. Grey, General Mail Secretary of UNIA and ACL, and Assistant Secretary of the BSL, claimed Garvey had three stock books when he went to Virginia to sell stocks in the interest of the BSL, but claimed he lost them when he returned, preventing his officers from being able to make proper entries in the BSL’s ledgers.

Richard E. Warner, Executive Secretary of the UNIA and Secretary of the BSL, concurred with the statements made by Grey, claiming that he “protested and submitted his resignation when he learned that Garvey was ‘bent on misappropriating the funds collected by the Black Star Line.’”³⁵⁸ Garvey dismissed both Grey and Warner as BSL directors and officers less than two weeks later, after being questioned again by Kilroe.³⁵⁹ At the dedication ceremony of the new UNIA home, dubbed Liberty Hall, on July 27, 1919, Garvey mentioned that he would

³⁵⁵ The Rand School of Social Science was formed in 1906 to provide a class-conscious education to workers, and also served as a meeting place for socialists and trade unionists. (Hill, 1:456, n.2).

³⁵⁶ Bureau of Investigation Report, National Archives, Washington, D.C., RR 65, File OG 329359, Typed document, New York City, July 10, 1919, in Hill, 1:454-57.

³⁵⁷ Statement of Edgar M. Grey, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-373/3, Typed document, Transcript, New York City, July 18, 1919, in Hill, 1:462-63.

³⁵⁸ Statement of Richard E. Warner, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-373/4, Typed document, Transcript, New York City, July 18, 1919, in Hill, 1:463-64.

³⁵⁹ Hill, 1:cxvi.

have to appear before Kilroe the next morning because while he was away in the South he left “two scoundrels” in charge of the office and they, both occupying official positions, “had used the knowledge they gained of the aims and objects of the [UNIA] to assist the white men of the country, especially District Attorney Kilroe, to hound and persecute him.”³⁶⁰ Garvey attested that he was worried he might become “a victim of the malice of his enemies.” True to form and his vindictive nature, Garvey printed an article in the *Negro World* the day he fired Grey and Warner entitled, “Two Negro Crooks Use Office of Deputy District Attorney Kilroe to Save Themselves from Jail.”³⁶¹ Garvey reported that Kilroe had failed to indict him for the sixth time because he depended “on the perjured statements of Negro vagabonds and scoundrels” in order to “frame up” Garvey.³⁶² Garvey claimed the men he had left in charge while he was away had robbed the organization and sought the aid of Kilroe, who “offered them immunity if they would frame up Mr. Garvey.” Kilroe admitted that he prevented Garvey getting a warrant for the arrest of Grey, and Garvey told the DA that “he was waiting for the opportunity to expose the di[r]t that surrounds the District Attorney’s office when he, Kilroe, could associate himself with and offer protection to men who had robbed the [UNIA] and the institutions it controls.”³⁶³ This incident confirmed Garvey’s suspicions that his “enemies” were conspiring with the government to thwart his efforts.

³⁶⁰ “Liberty Hall Dedicated at Great Mass Meeting. Marcus Garvey Defies his Enemies – Black Star Line Going Over the Top,” *Negro World*, Saturday, August 2, 1919, in Hill, 1:471-73.

³⁶¹ “Two Negro Crooks Use Office of Deputy District Attorney Kilroe to Save Themselves from Jail,” *Negro World*, Saturday, August 2, 1919, in Hill, 1:474-75.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ Ibid.

On August 4, 1919, Kilroe swore out a warrant for the arrest of Garvey on the charge of publishing criminal libel.³⁶⁴ Garvey was indicted a second time on August 28, 1919, on an identical charge of criminal libel, but both indictments were amalgamated. When the case finally reached trial Garvey filed a retraction statement and published a public apology on the front page of the *Negro World*. Convinced that Garvey's ties to the black American left were one of the most troubling aspects of his propaganda, on August 5, 1919, the day after Kilroe swore out an arrest warrant for Garvey, New York DA Edward Swann questioned Garvey regarding his relationships with the IWW, the socialists, and anarchists.³⁶⁵ A few days later Garvey pled not guilty to the charges and Kilroe was replaced by New York DA Swann as chief investigator into the finances of the BSL.³⁶⁶

J. Edgar Hoover, Special Assistant to the Attorney General, filed a report on August 12, 1919 to Frank Burke, claiming that the principal "phases of the Negro movement into which inquiry should be made" were "The Messenger," described as "the Russian organ of the Bolsheviki in the United States" and the "headquarters of revolutionary thought," and the UNIA.³⁶⁷ Mentioning Garvey specifically, Hoover claimed that "there appears to be an intense feeling existing between Garvey and the group supporting 'The Messenger'," and that "inquiry should be made as to the citizenship of all persons connected" with either of these "phases of the Negro movement."³⁶⁸ Hoover was convinced that "in his [Garvey] paper the 'Negro World' the

³⁶⁴ "Complaint of Edwin P. Kilroe against Marcus Garvey," *People v. Garvey*, No. 126535, Ct. Spec. Sess., N.Y. County Ct. Aug. 9, 1920, Typed document signed, New York, August 4, 1919, in Hill, 1:475-76.

³⁶⁵ Hill, 1:cxvi.

³⁶⁶ Hill, 2:xlix.

³⁶⁷ J. Edgar Hoover, Special Assistant to the Attorney General, to Frank Burke Attachment, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 258421, Typed document, Washington, D.C., August 12, 1919, in Hill, 1:479-81.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

Soviet Russian Rule is upheld and there is open advocacy of Bolshevism.”³⁶⁹ In response to Hoover’s report, Burke wrote to Active Division Superintendent Joseph A. Baker, requesting a summary of information in files to prepare for deportation proceeding against Garvey.³⁷⁰ Assistant Attorney General Robert P. Stewart wrote a letter to Secretary of Labor William Bauchop Wilson, stating that the recent race riots in Chicago and Washington had aided Garvey’s propaganda immensely and suggested ways to “remove him with out creating the impression /of persecution/ among his deluded followers.”³⁷¹

The Bureau of Investigation considered class-consciousness to be a crucial component of Negro radicalism. On July 2, 1919, Robert Adger Bowen prepared a report entitled, “Radicalism and Sedition Among the Negroes as Reflected in their Publications,” which gave a general survey of the field of black publication in order to demonstrate the “dangerous influences at work upon the negro, and the concerted effort, abetted by certain prominent white publicists, to arouse the negro a well-defined class-consciousness, sympathetic only with the most malign radical movements.”³⁷² “The purpose of this summary,” Bowen claimed, “[is to make clear] that the negro is rapidly being made strongly race conscious and class conscious, and that to him his way of salvation is felt to lie not in conformity to the law but in defiance and antagonism of it...” The “ablest” of Negro leaders, according to Bowen, were advocates of Bolshevism, violence,

³⁶⁹ J. Edgar Hoover to Special Agent Ridgely, National Archives, Washington, D.C., RG 60, file 198940, Typed manuscript signed, recipient’s copy, Washington, D.C., October 11, 1919, in Hill, 2:72.

³⁷⁰ Frank Burke to Joseph A. Baker, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 185161, Typed letter, Carbon copy, Washington, D.C., August 15, 1919, in Hill, 1:482.

³⁷¹ Robert P. Stewart, Assistant Attorney General to William Bauchop Wilson, Secretary of Labor, Washington, D.C., August 15, 1919, Enclosure, National Archives, Washington, D.C., RG 60, File 198940-2, Autograph letter, Recipient’s copy, Stamped endorsement, New York City, August 11, 1919, in Hill, 1:482-85.

³⁷² Robert Adger Bowen to William Lamar, “Radicalism and Sedition Among the Negroes as Reflected in their Publications,” New York, August 16, 1919, Attachment, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, File OG 359561, Typed document signed, Recipient’s copy, A carbon copy located in National Archives, Washington, D.C., RG 28, File B-240, has the following endorsement written in Bowen’s hand: “Prepared for W[illiam]. F. Keohan at his request. B[owen],” New York, July 2, 1919, in Hill, 1:487-89.

direct action, and were affiliated with the I.W.W. The *Negro World* is reported to have come into being because of the “conservative character” of such publications as the *Crisis*, the *Nation* and the *Crusader*. The Justice Department attributed the recent racial propaganda making noteworthy headway among black leaders to the doctrines preached by “I.W.W. agitators and radical socialists,” who were “winning new converts among the negroes” over the past three months.³⁷³

The Bureau’s official position on Garvey and his movement is made clear in a report filed on August 22, 1919,: “[*The Negro World*] first came to our attention during the elections of 1918, when Garvey, his association, and the paper came out squarely in support of all candidates on the Socialist ticket...Retaliating for its support of the Socialist Party, the New York ‘Call’, Socialist Daily, in an editorial thanked the ‘Negro World’ and since that time has been on very friendly terms.”³⁷⁴ However, the report attests that although the “Negro World” had shown sympathy with Socialism, and particularly Bolshevism, in the past, Garvey has been “clever enough to see the error of his tactics in entering the field upon a partisan political standpoint.”³⁷⁵ With William Ferris serving as literary editor of the *Negro World*, the Bureau had further reason to associate Garvey with the black American left. When a special agent visited the offices of the newspaper, Ferris reportedly told him that “the hope of the Negro was in the Socialist Party.”³⁷⁶

³⁷³ “Subject: The Negro Situation,” Brig. Gen. Marlborough Churchill to Gen. Peyton Conway March, Chief of Staff, Washington, August 20, 1919, Attachment, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-361/1 190X, Typed document signed, Recipient’s copy, Washington, D.C., August 15, 1919.

³⁷⁴ “In RE: “NEGRO WORLD” Negro Activities,” Bureau of Investigation Report, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, File 10218-261/59, Typed document, Stamped endorsement, New York, August 22, 1919, in Hill, 1:494-96.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Report by Special Agent C-C, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 258421, Typed document, Final sentence and endorsement are handwritten, New York, N.Y., August 27, 1919, in Hill, 2:1.

According to a British Military Intelligence Report transmitted to the director of Military Intelligence Division in New York, at a UNIA meeting on August 17, Dr. M. N. Shaw, representative of the UNIA in Massachusetts, delivered a speech defending Bolshevism:

“America is the greatest plutocracy in the world, that it is governed and controlled by a few capitalist grafters... That if the majority means Bolshevism, than the negro has no cause against Bolshevism... How can negroes be against the majority rule that would mean freedom?”³⁷⁷

According to a separate intelligence report, Shaw “explained the meaning of Bolshevik to be a Russian word which means Majority and mean the same as our word democracy or the rule of the majority and that there was nothing bad in it all. He spoke of Socialism to mean that they who produced sh[o]uld have the fruits of their labor and he [*who?*] did not work should not receive anything[.]”³⁷⁸ The report claimed that Garvey denied that the unrest of the Negro was due to or was aided by the Bolshevik, I.W.W., Socialists or any political party, but that his organization was a “blackman’s party.” However, Garvey reportedly mentioned “the struggle between Capital and Labor” and said that he would combine with the party or side which would “give the Negro what the Negro wanted.” The Bureau reported that a September 20, 1919, issue of the *Negro World* contained pro and con letters by Claude McKay and William H. Ferris, the former, the report pointed out, advocated “Bolshevism as a means of freedom for the negro.”³⁷⁹

³⁷⁷ British Military Intelligence Report, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 10218-364/3, Typed document, transcript, Copy supplied by Lt. Col. Norman G. Thwaites, British Provost Marshal’s Office, New York; transmitted in Maj. H. A. Strauss to director of the Military Intelligence Division, New York, September 5, 1919, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 10218-364/4 190X, New York, August 19, 1919, in Hill, 2:7-9.

³⁷⁸ Reports by Special Agent C-C, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OF 258421, Typed document, New York, August 30, 1919, in Hill, 2:9-11.

³⁷⁹ “Negro World,” Robert Bowen to William H. Lamar, National Archives, Washington, D.C., RG 28, file B-500, Typed letter signed, recipient’s copy, Handwritten endorsement, New York, September 22, 1919, in Hill, 2:20-21.

By late September 1919, Garvey's propaganda frequently included references to his trouble with Assistant DA Kilroe and the difficulty the DA was having indicting Garvey.

On October 16, 1919, two days after Garvey's assassination attempt, the Bureau issued a negatively biased biography on the UNIA leader, whom they described as "very quick tempered" with "frequent outbursts of temper...willing to insult and fight."³⁸⁰ Confusing, or embellishing, their facts in order to paint him out to be the violent, white-hating swindler they believed him to be, the Bureau claimed that Garvey had gone to Central America because he assaulted a Jamaican cab driver after refusing to pay him, that he was arrested on an outbound steamer in Port Limon Harbor for debts he had contracted, and that the Jamaica Improvement Association "met and discussed anti-White affairs." Referring to the *Negro World*, the Bureau's report claimed Garvey would "change the headlines [of clippings from white dailies], add inflammatory sentences, insert anti-white sub-headings and, in short, lead the negroes to believe that the white race is entirelyly against them." The report concludes by referencing Kilroe's open promise to Garvey that he will be sending him to jail for fraud and deporting him.

A British Military Intelligence Report forwarded to the United States Military Intelligence Division on January 13, 1920 claimed that a month earlier Garvey promised to make Europe airplanes, machine guns and instruments of war look "like Santa Claus' toys to what we mean to put out," when the time came for Negroes to "fight, and die if need be, for the principle of a free Africa."³⁸¹ The report claimed that at Madison Square Garden Garvey said that because

³⁸⁰ Bureau of Investigation Report, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 185161, Typed document, New York, October 16, 1919, in Hill, 2:72-78.

³⁸¹ British Military Intelligence Report, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 10218-364-18-190X, Typed document, recipient's copy, Enclosure in Maj. H.A. Strauss to the director of the Military Intelligence Division, January 13, 1920, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special

Negro veterans did not receive democracy when they returned from the war that they intended to carry on the war until they received democracy.³⁸² Garvey claimed that he did not hate the white man, but was speaking this way because the Negro had been so merciful while being dominated for over five hundred years.

On February 9, 1920, the Bureau reported that Special Agent Jones had attended two UNIA meetings in Virginia, in which he spoke at length with Major Joseph Kind, who is head of the military branch of the association.³⁸³ According to Jones, King outlined the purpose of the organization, claiming that Garvey was collecting money to pay off Liberia's debt to the United States so that the association's headquarters could be transferred to Monrovia. In the meantime, Garvey was reportedly preparing for this movement by organizing a military branch of the UNIA, which had about two hundred men drilling every week. If further evidence of Garvey's anti-American activities were necessary, Jones claimed that he, King and Henry Plumber were "rewriting the U.S. Army Drill regulations to suit this organization... The oath of allegiance that every U.S. soldier takes will be changed so as to read: 'To the Hon. Marcus Garvey', instead of 'To the President of the United States.'"³⁸⁴ Several days later the Bureau decided to investigate claims concerning the UNIA's drilling with firearms.³⁸⁵ The Bureau received a report from British Military Intelligence of an anonymous letter referencing the UNIA's drilling: "According

staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 10218-364-190X, New York, January 7, 1920, in Hill, 2:177-82.

³⁸² Report by John F. Daly, "Jubilee of Universal Negro Improvement Association. Professor Buck and Marcus Garvey," Certified Shorthand Reporter, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 185161, Typed document, Madison Square Garden, New York, N.Y., October 30, 1919, in Hill, 2:123-132.

³⁸³ Report by Special Agent Jones, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 185161, Typed document, Stamped endorsements, Copies of this report were furnished to the bureau's Norfolk office, Norfolk, Va., February 9, 1920, in Hill, 2:201-203.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Hill, 2:lii.

to this letter they have regular drills given by ex-soldiers to hundreds of colored men, and it is their plan to smuggle these men with arms into Africa and the West Indies on the black Star Line as passengers.”³⁸⁶ The militaristic element of Garvey’s program concerned the Justice Department and impacted their efforts to deport him.

Thirty-two members of the IWW were arrested in Illinois for conspiracy on January 30, 1920, including someone who identified himself as Marcus Garvey. Whether this person happened to share the name or, as Hill suspects, tried to conceal their identity by assuming Garvey’s name, the assistant DA was convinced that they were the same man and passed this misinformation to the Bureau of Investigation.³⁸⁷ The DA for the Southern District of New York responded by opening a special case file on Garvey, placing him under investigation for inciting treason. Still convinced that Garvey was a socialist, the Bureau continued to perpetuate the notion that he was a key player in the black American left. According to a report on Garvey’s actions in Cleveland furnished to the bureau’s offices in Washington D.C. and New York as well as the United States Attorney, the first speaker at a UNIA meeting named Fuller, the official Cleveland representative of Garvey, was a member of the I.W.W. prior to December 1919. It attested that “he stopped paying his dues in January on the advice of Garvey, who wants to build up a labor movement of negroes alone.”³⁸⁸ The reporting agent mistakenly called the ACL the

³⁸⁶ British Military Intelligence Report, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 10218-364-22-190X, Typed document, recipient’s copy, It originally appeared as an enclosure to a letter from Maj. H.A. Strauss, Military Intelligence Division, to the director of MID, February 24, 1920, The report was referred to as having been “received from the British,” in Hill, 2:205-213.

³⁸⁷ Robert A. Hill, “Marcus Garvey and the Federal Prosecution Efforts, 1918-1927,” unpublished MS, 30-31, in Hill, 2:216.

³⁸⁸ Bureau of Investigation Reports, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 329359, Typed document, Copies of this report were furnished to the bureau’s Washington D.C. (three copies) and New York (one copy) offices, as well as to the United States attorney (two copies), Stamped endorsements, See also National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the War Department, General and Special staffs; Records of the Office of the Chief of Staff, file 100015-95, Cleveland, Ohio, May 14, 1920, in Hill, 2:339-41.

African Communists' League, and claimed Garvey "looks to Ludwig Martens, ambassador from the Soviet Union, as a true friend and supporter."

A week before the Convention of Negro Peoples of the World, the Bureau reported that Garvey was speaking out against class oppression. According to the report Garvey said, "Just at this time the world in which we live is reconstructing itself, readjusting itself, reorganizing itself. It has been a mixed-up world heretofore, a one-sided world wherein one class of men of a certain race of men swayed the rest of the world, dominated the rest of the world, and practically destroyed the rights and privileges of the other peoples of the world."³⁸⁹ Garvey points out that upon returning from the war, Africa, the West Indies and the US were in the same condition for the Negro that the white man had made before the war. The idea of democracy for the Negro was a farce and a lie: "[I]n the next three or four years one-third of the Negro population of the United States of America will be in a [sim]ilar condition or position as we were in 1913 before the war. We will be out of jobs, we will be starving, we will be living next door to starving and starvation except you start out to do something for yourselves."

The United States Department of Justice singled out Garvey's movement because of their conviction that it was directly tied to socialism, Bolshevism, and the radical left. Well aware of this fact, Garvey redirected the focus of his program and severed ties with some of his closest associates in the black American left. Although there were several significant contributing factors for Garvey's "retreat from radicalism," the Red Scare and the United States government's efforts to go after what they considered leftist organizations impacted the direction of his evolving program. Although his propaganda maintained a strong class appeal by the UNIA's

³⁸⁹ Bureau of Investigation Report: Enclosure, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 329359, Typed document, Washington, D.C., July 24, 1920, in Hill, 2:445-63.

First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in August 1920, Garvey distanced himself from a number of people associated with the black American left, especially those being singled out by the Department of Justice and those who criticized him publicly.

4.10 Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World (August 1920)

At the core of Garvey's ideology by the convention of 1920 was the idea that the institutions that blacks had relied on for bettering their condition were controlled by whites, and for this reason they would always be unequal and second class. The need for blacks to control their own destiny by maintaining their own institutions was now a detrimental aspect of Garvey's propaganda. Hence, Garvey announced the first major international convention of Negroes was to be held throughout the entire month of August 1920, in which the "future government of four hundred million black men, women and children will be discussed."³⁹⁰ Garvey explained the need for such a convention: "After close study of world affairs at the present time, I have discovered that there is a skillfully engineered propaganda among the other races to cause the active-minded Negro to believe that a real effort is being made to better his condition, therefore it is not n[e]cessary for him to have any exclusive organization of his own."³⁹¹ Attesting that the time had arrived for the Negro to play his own part in world affairs, Garvey again pointed out that the world was preparing for another international conflict and that Negroes had fought and died for the white man for the last time. He stressed the importance of laying the foundation for commercial and industrial prosperity in the period of peace before the inevitable struggle began.

³⁹⁰ Marcus Garvey, "All Negroes Should Pull Together for a Strong and Untied Race," Printed in *Garvey v. United States*, no. 8317, Ct. App., 2d Cir., February 2, 1925, government exhibit no. 149, Montreal, Canada, January 8, 1920, in Hill, 2:186-88.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

Garvey put out an open invitation to attend the “great world convention of Negroes” in the *Negro World* on June 19, 1920, requesting all “friendly, fraternal, social, religious, political, industrial and commercial Negro Organizations” to send accredited delegates.³⁹² Garvey explained that at the meeting delegates will elect leaders of respective fields of operations, including a “leader of American Negro thought,” who would become the “accredited spokesman” of the millions of American Negroes, and “His Highness, the Potentate,” who would be the accredited head of the UNIA movement all over the world. The next day Garvey announced that a Negro Constitution/Charter would be drawn up at the convention as well, which William Ferris compared to the Magna Charta and Declaration of Independence.³⁹³

As the convention approached, the *Negro World* continued publishing propaganda that suggested blacks fight for themselves in the next inevitable war. Because the Bolsheviks of Russia were “making it very warm” for Europe, Garvey was convinced that “the bloodiest war the world has ever experienced” was approaching in the next few decades, and when it came he wanted “400,000,000 black face folks to be fighting under one banner, the banner of the Red, the Black and the Green.”³⁹⁴ On the opening day of the convention, Garvey clarified that their purpose over the next month was to discuss the great problems that confront the Negro and to frame a bill of rights for the Negro peoples of the world. Garvey claimed they were there as free people, claiming equal rights with the rest of mankind, and explained that the best thing for

³⁹² Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, June 19, 1920, Original headlines omitted, New York, June 15, 1920, in Hill, 2:348-49.

³⁹³ Report of UNIA Meeting, *Negro World*, June 26, 1920, Original headlines omitted, New York, June 20, 1920, in Hill, 2:380-88.

³⁹⁴ “Near Approach of Great Convention Draws Record Crowd at Liberty Hall,” *Negro World*, July 31, 1920, Original headlines abbreviated, New York, July 25, 1920, in Hill, 2:436-43.

blacks to do in order to provide national protection for themselves was to consolidate their racial force in building their own motherland, Africa.³⁹⁵

The class element of Garvey's propaganda was present throughout the convention. At the UNIA Parade, alongside banners with slogans reading "Down with Lynching" and "Liberty or Death" were banners reading "We Believe in the Liberal Institutions of America."³⁹⁶ On the third day of the convention, Garvey read aloud a telegram from a Jewish Zionist Socialist, who "heartily and unflinchingly" joined the "historical movement for the reclamation of Africa."³⁹⁷ Throughout the convention various delegates spoke about labor conditions in their constituencies. The delegate from Guatemala boasted of the UNIA's role in establishing a union, which successfully forced the United Fruit Company to increase wages by one hundred per cent.³⁹⁸ The delegate from Bermuda complained that schools were all private and did not receive any government support, but that within recent years, through the instrumentality of Garvey, they had formed a teachers union, which was working for better conditions. The delegate from Antigua complained about the Contract Labor Law, which he claimed held the black laborers in "veritable peonage" because they would not allow laborers to move from one sugar estate to another, did not allow days off, and had to give thirty to ninety days' notice if they wanted to quit.³⁹⁹ Delegates claimed that a caste system existed among black people in Philadelphia, that in Newark, New Jersey, three classes existed: low, middle and very high, and that in Portsmouth,

³⁹⁵ "International Convention of Negroes Opens in Blaze of Glory," *Negro World Convention Bulletin*, August 2, 1920, in Hill, 2:476-87.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ Report of a Madison Square Garden Meeting, Printed in *NWCB*, August 3, 1920, in Hill, 2:497-509.

³⁹⁸ Hill, 2:510-25.

³⁹⁹ Reports of the Convention, Printed in *NWCB*, August 7, 1920, Original headlines omitted, Liberty Hall, New York, Aug. 4, 1920, in Hill, 2:529-38.

Virginia, even the government, in giving out employment in the Navy Yard, discriminated against blacks, hiring whites first and giving them more pay.⁴⁰⁰

The bureau claimed that with all the “Red speeches” and “Anti-White talks,” Liberty Hall was the greatest modern “hot-bed for the teaching of race antagonism, race hatred, and class hatred, and Garvey is the head of the stress.”⁴⁰¹ Convinced by the end of the first week of the convention that Garvey’s teaching was “without a doubt a purely anti-white campaign and the Negro World is the instrument employed to spread the propaganda,” the bureau conducted an interview with associate editor of the *Negro World*, Hudson Price.⁴⁰² Price claimed that he had met with two Japanese men who were “very much in sympathy with the Garvey movement,” including Sen Katayama, director of the International Bureau of Red Syndicates, a contributor to the leftist journal the *Revolutionary Age*, and a leading Socialist and Communist organizer in North America and Japan. By 1919, he was an active worker for the Communist party and drawing the attention of the Bureau of Investigation.⁴⁰³

Garvey continued to use an iron hand to deal with critics and dissenters, calling his enemies “jealous,” “lacking in brains,” and “trouble-makers,” whom he claimed “should take warning, and let themselves be neither seen nor heard anywhere within or near the convention hall.”⁴⁰⁴ He commanded the Sergeant-at-Arms to ensure anyone opposing his suggestions “sit

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Report by Special Agent P-138, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 329359, Stamped endorsements, in Hill, 2:539-41.

⁴⁰² Report by Special Agent P-138, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 258421, Typed document, Stamped endorsement, New York City, 8/6/20, in Hill, 2:546-48.

⁴⁰³ Karl G. Yoneda, “The Heritage of Sen Katayama,” *Political Affairs* 14, no. 3 (March 1975): 38-57; National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, files BS 202600-58-11, 7B 136944, and OG17969; Sen Katayama, “The Socialist Movement in Japan,” *New York Call*, November 11, 1917; Hyman Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary: The Life of Sen Katayama*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964, in Hill, 2:547-48.

⁴⁰⁴ Report of the Convention, *Negro World*, August 14, 1920, New York, August 5-6, 1920, in Hill, 2:542-45.

down and shut up,” calling them cowards.⁴⁰⁵ The Bureau reported that Garvey “exercises perfect control over the delegates,” whom they claimed were “utterly afraid to vote against Garvey’s will,” lest they be “clapped down and called traitors of the race by the audience.”⁴⁰⁶ It is important to note that Garvey’s personal characteristics affected his response to criticism, and by the convention it had reached the point of zero tolerance.

Garvey addressed the racial discrimination existing within the class struggle in the United States, suggesting that poor white Southerners would not allow blacks to succeed in Harlem while they remained impoverished, and would drive them out of Harlem one day as they did in the South.⁴⁰⁷ The Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World, a comprehensive human rights document, directly addressed the class struggle, complaining that blacks were “denied an equal chance to earn wages,” often “refused admission into labor unions,” and earned less than white men.⁴⁰⁸ Among the rights demanded were a number that appealed to the class struggle, including “equitable distribution” of “all things...created and given to man as common possession,” and “complete control of...social institutions without interference by any alien race.”⁴⁰⁹ It also declared it was “inhuman and unfair to boycott Negroes from industries and labor.”

⁴⁰⁵ Report by Special Agent P-138, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 329359, Typed document, Stamped endorsement, New York, August 12, 1920, in Hill, 2:569-70; National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 329359, Typed document, Stamped endorsements, New York City, August 19, 1920, in Hill, 2:608.

⁴⁰⁶ Report by Special Agent P-138, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 329359, Typed document, New York, August 21, 1920, in Hill, 2:609-612.

⁴⁰⁷ Reports of the Convention, *Negro World*, August 14, 1920, New York, August 8, 1920, in Hill, 2:551-63.

⁴⁰⁸ “...Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World”, New York, August 13, 1920, *Negro World*, September 11, 1920, Original headlines abbreviated, Notarized on August 15, 1920 by John G. Bayne, in Hill, 2:571-80.

⁴⁰⁹ “...Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World”, New York, August 13, 1920, *Negro World*, September 11, 1920, Original headlines abbreviated, Notarized on August 15, 1920 by John G. Bayne, in Hill, 2:571-80.

Addressing the affluent class of African Americans, Garvey pointed out the racial discrimination they faced, regardless of their economic social standing. According to Garvey, even if intellectually and financially superior, blacks were nonetheless subject to ridicule from whites. “This class of Negroes,” he explained, “perhaps stifle their righteous indignation through sheer force of economic pressure.”⁴¹⁰ Although he was clearly beginning to distance himself from many associates in the black American left during this period, Garvey’s program was still primarily aimed at black labor and the working class, and there continued to be a strong class element to his propaganda throughout the convention.

On August 17 at the convention, Garvey read an article from the New York Globe about a black policemen strike in Jamaica and also the striking of railroad workers on the island, which was organized by the local Federation of Labor.⁴¹¹ Garvey said that he was glad to hear this good news, which he attributed to the result of his propaganda, and moved that the convention send a cable of support to the strike leader in Jamaica. The Jamaican attorney general received a copy of the cable from the manager of the *Gleaner*, Michael de Cordova, and forwarded it to the colonial secretary in Kingston. The colonial secretary claimed that this information was proof of the direct connection between the Garvey’s association and the president of the local Federation of Labor, Bain Alves, who sent a cable thanking Garvey for his support. In turn, the American consul in Kingston sent a message to the secretary of state.⁴¹² Garvey had also sent a cable of sympathy and financial aid to West Indian employees of the Panama Canal and the Panama

⁴¹⁰ Marcus Garvey, *Negro World*, August 21, 1920; reprinted in *Garvey v. United States*, no. 8317, Ct. App., 2d Cir., February 2, 1925, government exhibit no 3, New York, August 17, 1920, in Hill, 2:599-600.

⁴¹¹ Reports by Special Agent P-138, National Archives, Washington, D.C., Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, file OG 329359, Typed document, New York City, August 19, 1920, in Hill, 2:607-08.

⁴¹² Charles Latham to Bainbridge Colby, National Archives, Washington, D.C., General records of the Department of State, file 811.108 G 191/11, in Hill, 2:607-08.

railway who went on strike a few months earlier.⁴¹³ It is important to note the international collusion between Garvey's enemies, mostly officialdom concerned about the impact of his program. Garvey's movement was cause for concern not only to the United States government, but to governments of the Caribbean, Central America and Europe as well. Hence, even as Garvey distanced himself from the black American left his propaganda still demonstrated a strong class appeal.

Even as Garvey began distancing himself from the left U.S. officialdom believed his program was tied to the socialist movement. During the convention Charles Mowbray White interviewed five black leaders, including Garvey, Du Bois, Owen and Randolph, on the prospects of Garveyism, under the guise that he preparing for a lecture. White, who was reporting to the antiradical National Civic Federation, was a lecturer on socialism and radicalism.⁴¹⁴ In his report, White noted that the colors adopted by the UNIA were red, black and green. Garvey told him that the red showed their sympathy with the "Reds" of the world, green their sympathy for the Irish in their fight for freedom, and the black – the negro.⁴¹⁵ When interviewed by White, Du Bois stated that he believed Garvey and his followers were allied with the Bolsheviks in their world revolution, giving White further reason to associate Garvey's movement with the black American left.⁴¹⁶ A bureau agent reported that Hubert Harrison, whom

⁴¹³ Hill, 2:lii.

⁴¹⁴ (Marguerite Green, *The National Civic Federation and the American Labor Movement, 1900-1925*, Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1956, 402-9; New York Public Library, New York, National Civic Federation Papers, NN, "The New Negro," box 152).

⁴¹⁵ Interview with Marcus Garvey by Charles Mowbray White, New York Public Library, New York, National Civic Federation Papers, NN, "The Negro," box 152, Typed document, draft copy with handwritten corrections and portions underlined for emphasis, Manhattan, August 18, 1920, in Hill, 2:602-04.

⁴¹⁶ Interview with W.E.B. Du Bois by Charles Mowbray White, New York Public Library, New York, National Civic Federation Papers, NN, "The Negro," box 152, Typed document, draft copy, New York, August 22, 1920, in Hill, 2:620-21.

he identified as a Socialist, joined the convention as a delegate and pointed out that he was associate editor of the *Negro World*.

In an editorial letter printed four days after the convention closed Garvey explained why he now believed that his people should interest themselves in their own fortunes “independently of alien influence.”⁴¹⁷ He pointed to the increasing number of lynchings in the United States and the political, industrial and educational lynching of black people across the world as evidence of deteriorating conditions. He believed that World War I and the UNIA had helped transform Negroes from “cringing persons, pleading for rights and privileges cruelly denied them[,] into upstanding men and women demanding those rights and privileges and determined to exercise them regardless of consequences.” Now was the time to act on the new-found opportunities.

Near the end of the convention Garvey explained the meaning of what his movement had become, claiming that the UNIA was the only movement aside from the Bolshevik Revolution that concerned Western powers. However, Garvey gave a vague explanation when deciphering between his movement and that of the Bolsheviks: “[T]hank God, we are not Soviets, we are the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League...and if they can tell what that means, it is for them to interpret. We know what it means; it means liberty.”⁴¹⁸ While claiming that his program was not Bolshevik, Garvey himself could not clearly explain exactly what the difference was. Hence, the fact that Garvey distanced his movement from the

⁴¹⁷ Marcus Garvey, “Great Convention of Negroes Closes After Making History for the Race,” New York, August 31, 1920, *Negro World*, September 4, 1920, This editorial was marked “exhibit #10” as part of a file of exhibits attached to a letter of May 11, 1921 from J. Edgar Hoover to William L. Hurley, National Archives, Washington, D.C., General records of the Department of State, file 000-612.

⁴¹⁸ Report of the Convention, *Negro World*, August 28, 1920, Liberty Hall, August 22, 1920, in Hill, 2:614-620.

black American left, yet maintained a strong class appeal in his propaganda, has made scholarship on his “radical phase” especially difficult.

4.11 Conclusion

The nature of Garvey’s split with the black American left has not been completely understood by historians. Although he became a vocal foe of the socialist movement in the 1920s, prior to and through the 1920 Convention his propaganda continued to appeal to the class struggle and many of Garvey’s closest associates were socialists and leftists, namely the editors of his journal. By the convention, Garvey had distanced himself from a number of these former associates in the black American left. While he was aware of the emerging post-war commercial and industrial age where “every race of mankind was endeavoring to strike out independently for their own development,” the class appeal of his propaganda remained a significant component to the ideology of the movement throughout the convention. Garvey believed in class solidarity, but did not have as socialist or Marxist ideology. He was a pragmatist, not ideologically driven, and economic theory was secondary to black autonomy in his philosophy.

A heightened government campaign to monitor and remove him during the peak of the Red Scare, based on the premise that he was a mouthpiece for the black American left and the socialist movement, and an increase in the amount of criticism he was facing from many of his former associates, many of whom were Socialists and leftists, led to Garvey distance himself from the black American left. Garvey was not concerned with the socialist appeal of his newspaper until the government targeted him and his editor for the nature of their propaganda, which they believed was aimed primarily at black labor.

Frustrated by the rejection of the black delegates the UNIA sent to the Paris Peace Conference, the racial inequality within the labor and socialist movements, and the failure of the United States government to protect blacks from violence, Garvey began to espouse the idea that the institutions that blacks were relying on to improve their condition were controlled by whites, and for this reason they would always be unequal. However, it is important to note that even though Garvey saw Bolshevism and the labor movement as white institutions with limited direct benefits to blacks, the class struggle remained a crucial element of his program throughout the 1920 convention.

The personal and political intersected in Garvey's world in 1919 and 1920, impacting his ideas, program and relationships. In the years that his relationship with the black American left began to disintegrate Garvey survived an assassination attempt, divorced his wife and buried his father. During this period the Bureau of Investigation targeted him as a radical leftist, many of his former associates became bitter opponents, and he found himself involved in a series of legal disputes. Determined to purge those obstacles from his personal and professional life that were hindering the success of his program, Garvey distanced himself and his organizations from the black American left, focusing on strengthening Africa through commerce and industry while maintaining a strong class appeal to his propaganda.

Garvey saw the success of the August 1920 Convention as proof that African redemption was the key to uplifting the race and that his program was the best way to achieve this. He went on a fundraising tour through the Caribbean in February 1921, despite the fact that he was aware of the U.S. government's determination to keep him from returning. After being repeatedly denied one, Garvey was eventually granted a visa and returned to the United States. This moment is often cited as the catalyst for Garvey's "retreat from radicalism," when he entered a

new political phase and became a vocal foe of the socialist movement. However, Garvey's relationship with the black American left began deteriorating in 1919 and 1920 for reasons more complex than simply avoiding being deported by a paranoid United States government.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Although he worked closely with the black American left through his radical phase, Garvey ultimately distanced himself and his program from them, and he did so for several reasons. During the final years of his radical phase, Garvey's ideas, program and relationships were impacted by a collision of the personal and political in his world. As he began distancing his program from the black American left, Garvey lived through an assassination attempt, became involved in a series of legal disputes, divorced his newlywed bride and lost his father. During this period the United States government was concerned that the success of the Bolsheviks was achieved through revolution rather than social reform, and the race riots during and following the war gave them reason to believe that similar tactics could be used in the United States, causing them to monitor organizations that they considered too far left. Many U.S. officials considered Garvey's the most dangerous and radical of these organizations, as well as a mouthpiece for the black American left and socialist movement, and their infiltration and surveillance of his organization reflected this position, adding to Garvey's suspicions that his enemies were out to get him.

Increased criticism from former associates that were socialists and leftists, coupled with his exclusion from African-American intelligentsia, impacted his decision to embrace an alternative program, since Garvey was a pragmatist, not ideologically driven, and economic theory was secondary to black autonomy in his philosophy. Garvey began distancing himself from many associates in the black American left that were being particularly closely monitored, especially those who were critical of him or his program. He was not concerned with the socialist appeal of

his newspaper until he and his editor were targeted by the Department of Justice for the nature of their propaganda, which was believed to be primarily aimed at black labor.

Two sets of events shaped Garvey's ideas about racial uplift during his formative years. Witnessing the exploitation of workers in Central America gave him a sense of purpose and heightened his sense of identification with the working class. His ideas for radical action developed from these experiences. Secondly, his ideas of pan-Africanism and social uplift stemmed from his introduction to black intellectual life in London. The values Garvey obtained from both of these experiences are reflected in both his first UNIA organization in Jamaica as well as in his international organization based in New York.

Garvey quickly associated himself with African American race leaders, many of whom were known socialists, anarchists and leftists, and although his program and ideas were unsuccessful in Jamaica, a social consciousness and belief in self-governance rooted in his Caribbean experience remained a crucial aspect to his ideology. Garvey would incorporate the racial consciousness and belief in social justice of the African-American community into his program, combining with the social consciousness of the Caribbean. Hence, his perception of race relations in the United States was shaped by his formative Caribbean experience. Garvey's propaganda demonstrated a class appeal that supported the international left and the workers' movements from the time he arrived in the United States until after July 1921, when he entered a new political phase.

Garvey believed that organized labor was to blame for the racial violence in the United States during and following the war. By the end of the war he began to attest that the inequality within the white institutions that blacks depended on to improve their condition, including the labor and socialist movements as well as the United States government and armed forces, was

not going to change until blacks established their own power and autonomy. The rejection of the UNIA delegates sent to represent blacks at the Paris Peace Conference solidified this position. Garvey observed the international imperialistic and capitalistic trends emerging post-war and believed that blacks would only achieve freedom of action and opportunity if they embraced these trends and established their own power. Since he began to see the black struggle as racial rather than economic, the power of the state seemed an unlikely way to achieve better conditions. However, even as his program and ideology became more racial and industrially-focused, the class struggle remained a significant component of Garvey's ideology and propaganda through his radical phase.

Garvey entered a new political phase, often referred to as his "retreat from radicalism," when he returned to the United States in 1921, after repeatedly being denied a visa. During this period he openly denounced the black American left, black trade unionism, labor activism, and any group committed to social equality, abandoned his revolutionary, militaristic, often anti-white rhetoric and became patriotic in his speeches and propaganda. Yet, the changes in Garvey's ideology and program were not merely the result of his desire to appease the government so that he could return to the United States. In the final years of his radical phase, as he went through a series of personal losses and struggles, Garvey experienced increased criticism from the black intelligentsia, who had largely excluded him as an immigrant. His evolving ideology was shaped by his formative experiences, absorbing ideas from his work in the Caribbean, Central America, Europe and the United States. By the time he clearly laid out his plans for black redemption at the UNIA's First International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World in August 1920, his ideology had evolved with the world around him. During the final years of his radical phase, Garvey moved his program in the direction of black autonomy, black

imperialism, separatism and capitalism. His rejection of the black American left upon his return to the United States in February 1921 was not only a political decision, but a personal and a pragmatic one as well.

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