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William Harrison Riley an Karl Marx in London. London, Freitag, 31. Mai 1872

Lindenberg, Thomas (Bearbeitung)
Lura, Caroline (Bearbeitung)

Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften (BBAW) Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe

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Handschriftenbeschreibung:

Soweit aus der Fotokopie zu ersehen ist, besteht der Brief aus zwei Bogen weißem Papier. Riley hat sieben Seiten vollständig und die achte Seite etwa zur Hälfte beschrieben. Schreibmaterial: schwarze Tinte.

Archivsignatur des Moskauer Marx-Engels-Instituts (IMĖ) auf allen beschriebenen Seiten mit Bleistift: „RJ 360a–h“.

Absender: William Harrison Riley
Schreibort: London
Schreibdatum: 1872-05-31

Empfänger: Karl Marx
Empfangsort: London

| 7 Red Lion Court Fleet St EC. 31/5/72

To D[r] Karl Marx

Dea[r] Friend

Although you never found time to notice by letter of reply my letter to you[a] previous to the commencement of the I. H.[b] I do not hesitate to write to you again when I require your services.[1] John Vans Agnew[c] is arrested in Heidelberg—as a lunatic—this being the third time he has been deprived of his liberty. Previous to this arrest he (suspecting the intention) deposited in my care to be used in case of such emergency—letters, and Mss—of some importance.

I may be wrong—I hope not—but I candidly believe that he has been thus treated, this time, solely because he was proposing to take an active part in our Movement in which he was deeply interested and of which he claimed the right to be con|sidered an active supporter. He was intending to send his library of advanced literature to London—to be deposited in some room where he could meet “his advanced friends”. He claims to be yet the owner of £ 100.000 and he said last week that he had told his wife and his Tory brothers that he was tired of their continued insults and taunts and that he meant to separate amicably from his wife— making over to her ¾[th] of his property. This seems to have been the culminating point and now I hear that he is deprived of his liberty by consent of the authorities of Heidelberg. I | believe that some illegal arrangement was made with the post office keeper for a letter containing a ten pound cheque was stopped although I feel sure that it must have been posted by Mr John Vans Agnew[d] himself as he wrote his other letters that day (which came safe to hand) as also one on the succeeding day. I do not

lay any stress upon this note on account of the misscarriage of the money—I am glad I did not receive it but it may be a damaging thing to those who may have dealt improperly by the letter. Could you get to know from some Internationalist in Heidelberg whether or not Mr Agnew was well known by them to act as a lunatic—as a man not to be trusted with personal liberty. Also—where he | is confined &c.

If you have not had a copy of "Bold Musings" or "An Appeal to Reason"[e] I may be able to supply you—and I may remark that Mr Agnew[f]—(the author) explains that some of the peculiarities in "Bold Musings" (and I suppose the other) are due to the fact that he did not wish any one to spot the author by the style of writing. If he gets out sane—I have no doubt but that he will come to London and back up the Association with not less than £ 1000.

I cannot think him any worse than eccentric—after carefully reading his Mss—I should be pleased to give you the opportunity of perusing all the matter I have | but if I do so it will be in strict confidence. Mr Agnew[g] trusted these random writings to me—to be used at my discretion or not used at all. He forwarded the "index" to his reform library—it contains the names of 1500 books, some of them very valuable.

I feel quite grieved that I am so powerless to help him—and ask you to consider the matter.[2]It costs Mr Agnew[h] some £ 100[s] to print his books—and in those books he did his best to prove that he was an adherent to the principles of the Association. This in itself is enough to damn him in the opinion of all orthodox | editors and fashionables. But surely if anyone in this world should judge him kindly it should be those he wrote so ~~*vigourously*~~ vigorously in favour of.

That he is odd is certain—but that he is not fit to conduct his own business I have yet to find the proof of—and I have written to the brothers who informed me of the arrest to know what proof there was beyond democratic contempt of orthodox rules and his democratic writings and intentions.

Please excuse my haste for I must write rapidly or postpone it. Perhaps you | will be able to obtain some quiet information—also to give some good advice.[3]It is not always that a wealthy Internationalist turns up and it is useless to deny that the Association would like a member who would back it with a good banking account. This I believe Mr Agnew[i] was intending to do and even on pecuniary grounds it is worth while knowing whether this seizure is warranted or not.

Should you wish to look over the Mss I will bring them and also—his portrait—which bye the bye is of one of the handsomest men I ever saw. If Mr Agnew[j] is a lunatic his portrait or my judgement is not to be depended on. Hoping you will excuse | my scrawl—also my intrusion.

I Remain
Yours Fraternally

W[m] Harrison Riley

This letter I do not wish to be made public.

W H R.

Erläuterungen

a) Siehe W. H. Riley an Marx, 9.2.1872.

b) The International Herald

c) Agnew, John Vans (1824-1874)

d) Agnew, John Vans (1824-1874)

e) Die Titel sind nicht als Druckwerke nachweisbar.

f) Agnew, John Vans (1824-1874)

g) Agnew, John Vans (1824-1874)

h) Agnew, John Vans (1824-1874)

i) Agnew, John Vans (1824-1874)

j) Agnew, John Vans (1824-1874)

Kritischer Apparat

1) | _ |*Horizontale Lücke von 1 Wort*

2) | _ |*Horizontale Lücke von 1 Wort*

3) | _ |*Horizontale Lücke von 1 Wort*