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# The Workers Party of America's Comintern Appropriation Request for 1924.

A coded message to the Comintern, copy in Comintern Archive, f. 515, op. 1, d. 297, ll. 11-12.  
Typewritten transcript of the decode follows in *delo 297* as *list 13*.

January 10, 1924.

02560 44286 92265 41254 92115 42514 46925 62276 12540 81766  
75521 27550 72755 27126 94479 16362 08245 92245 60762 56211  
63725 44259 64974 77223 53924 65541 66490 52987 56023 97672  
24655 25273 09269 21154 25144 69252 17122 42762 72252 12755  
07275 52854 24212 92773 02167 40369 71271 65467 55984 16942  
36264 16748 13974 76256 26620 15245 59275 55419 56025 42102  
16372 62585 66109 53276 11791 63626 26552 34137 23493 22451  
92456 20190 51916 82754 27554 22986 92773 02549 56753 91325  
49876 22756 56022 33725 44269 64974 71163 72439 74744 27236  
25224 92598 42213 73346 64462 78254 24212 54426 96497 47116  
37243 97474 42712 73901 95460 57923 08245 91163 32544 26964  
97479 18446 03935 59849 23082 45921 68145 55422 98692 77252  
55923 64678 52712 69455 42298 69277

Fraternally Submitted,

C.E. Ruthenberg,  
Executive Secretary.

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January 10, 1924.

Request appropriation for WP nineteen twenty-four, *Daily Worker* — twenty-five thousand dollars. This amount we understood was appropriated for nineteen twenty-three and we included it in our publishing fund. It is important that we receive it quickly if daily is to live. Labor Party campaign — ten thousand; work in labor unions — twelve thousand, five hundred; literature publishing — three thousand, five hundred; educational work — five thousand; agricultural work — eight thousand. Total sixty-four thousand.

Fraternally Submitted,

C.E. Ruthenberg,  
Executive Secretary.

**Notes:** (1.) Be advised that this is a funding request from Chicago to Moscow, not the record of an amount approved, still less of an amount received. In previous years there were substantial reductions in the amount of appropriations requested by the American Communist movement. (2.) According to the party's published records, the WPA's total receipts for the fiscal year ending Nov. 30, 1923 amounted to about \$137,750 with expenditures of just under \$138,700. [*The Second Year*, (Chicago: WPA, 1924), pp. 33-34.] Bearing in mind that it is unknown at this juncture whether there were a parallel set of books kept or whether Comintern funds were integrated into the regular list of line-item receipts under misleading headings; also that receipts and expenditures of organizations such as the Trade Union Educational League were not incorporated into the regular WPA budget — an appropriation of \$64,000 would represent less than half of the total revenue of the WPA. (3.) Putting aside the dubious and incomplete published budget and looking at the question another way, an appropriation of \$64,000 — *if this request was actually approved and the funds successfully transmitted* — would represent a subsidy of approximately \$3.38 per member for an organization of 19,000 dues-paying members. Assuming WPA dues of 50 cents per month (\$6 per year) plus periodic additional assessments for conventions and special events, it seems likely that Comintern subsidies in this period actually represented something on the order of 1/4 to 1/3 of the total revenue of the Workers Party of America. We should consider this amount extremely significant, to be sure, but the organization would no doubt have survived on a reduced basis without the existence of this particular revenue stream. (4.) "Work in Labor Unions" probably represents the requested 1924 appropriation for the Trade Union Educational League (\$12,500). (5.) There are two copies of the coded message in the archival *delo*, the second of which reads "COPY OF LETTER" and has the additional date "March 1, 1924." The implication is that requested funds were not immediately transmitted by the Comintern. (6.) Although the numeric code appears at a glance to be based on sets of 5 digits to represent each letter, my observation of initial decode procedures on similar documents on the CI film indicates that the letters of the message were actually represented by groups of 3 digits broken out of the groups of five. Thus, the true numeric code should be represented as follows:

025 • 604 • 428 • 692 • 265 • 412 • 549 • 211 • 542 • 514 • 469 • 256 • 227 • 612 • 540 • 817 • 667 •  
 552 • 127 • 550 • 727 • 552 • 712 • 694 • 479 • 163 • 620 • 824 • 592 • 245 • 607 • 625 • 621 • 163 •  
 725 • 442 • 596 • 497 • 477 • 223 • 539 • 246 • 554 • 166 • 490 • 529 • 875 • 602 • 397 • 672 • 246 •  
 552 • 527 • 309 • 269 • 211 • 542 • 514 • 469 • 252 • 171 • 224 • 276 • 272 • 252 • 127 • 550 • 727 •  
 552 • 854 • 242 • 129 • 277 • 302 • 167 • 403 • 697 • 127 • 165 • 467 • 559 • 841 • 694 • 236 • 264 •  
 167 • 481 • 397 • 476 • 256 • 266 • 201 • 524 • 559 • 275 • 554 • 195 • 602 • 542 • 102 • 163 • 726 •  
 258 • 566 • 109 • 532 • 761 • 179 • 163 • 626 • 265 • 523 • 413 • 723 • 493 • 224 • 519 • 245 • 620 •  
 190 • 519 • 168 • 275 • 427 • 554 • 229 • 869 • 277 • 302 • 549 • 567 • 539 • 132 • 549 • 876 • 227 •  
 565 • 602 • 233 • 725 • 442 • 696 • 497 • 471 • 163 • 724 • 397 • 474 • 427 • 236 • 252 • 249 • 259 •  
 842 • 213 • 733 • 466 • 446 • 278 • 254 • 242 • 125 • 442 • 696 • 497 • 471 • 163 • 724 • 397 • 474 •  
 427 • 127 • 390 • 195 • 460 • 579 • 230 • 824 • 591 • 163 • 325 • 442 • 696 • 497 • 479 • 184 • 460 •  
 393 • 559 • 849 • 230 • 824 • 592 • 168 • 145 • 554 • 229 • 869 • 277 • 252 • 559 • 236 • 467 • 852 •  
 712 • 694 • 554 • 229 • 869 • 277 •

The only 3-digit numbers beginning with a "0" is the first — thus, this might be an indicator of the page of the code book being used rather than the first letter of the message. I notice some recurring numbers, also the fact that no 3-digit number begins with a "9." The groups of three digits may have corresponded to some sort of grid with the first digit representing a column and the last two digits a row (or vice-versa). Cryptologists should have fun with this little puzzle. Email me if you have a solution: [MutantPop@aol.com](mailto:MutantPop@aol.com).

*Edited with additional notes by Tim Davenport.*

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