
**Letter to C.E. Ruthenberg, Executive Secretary,
Workers Party of America in Chicago
from Antonas Bimba,† Staff Member
of *Laisve*, Brooklyn, NY.
Oct. 8, 1924.**

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Brooklyn, NY,
October 8, 1924.

Com. C.E. Ruthenberg,
Secy. WP of A,
1113 W Washington Blvd.
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Comrade:

A few weeks ago I wrote an article for the *Daily Worker* regarding its financial problems. In this article I made one practical suggestion which would at least partly solve these problems. I wrote from experience with the Lithuanian Daily *Laisve*. I then already anticipated without even knowing the exact financial situation of the *DW* that we would soon hear an appeal for financial assistance. Now I noticed in the minutes of the CEC of September 17 a decision to “begin a campaign on Nov. 7th to raise funds to cover the deficit of the *Daily Worker*.” I also read appeals in the *DW* for financial help.

You, of course, rightly expect from the members

of the party an honest and prompt response to that appeal. I also know that you expect assistance in this drive from the language press. Now, comrade, I am an active member of the party and am very interested in the success of the *DW*, but I also know this fact — that the membership of the party, and especially the members of various language sections, who have to support the language press, are being bled white with financial appeals. Hundreds of members stay away from the meetings just because they know that as soon as they step into the hall they will be asked to give a dollar or half a dollar for this or that purpose. Branch meetings are almost entirely taken up by discussions, fights, and arguments on the constantly flowing appeals for financial help. Our party is fast becoming only a money-getting agency.

I know that we cannot escape these appeals entirely, but it is the duty of the responsible party units to minimize them as much as it is humanly possible.

Now, those of us who are active in the movement and have had some experience with daily papers think that the *Daily Worker*, having behind it an active organization with 25,000 members, can be made a

†- Antonas “Anthony” Bimba was born Jan. 22, 1894 in Rokiskio, Lithuania. He came to the United States in 1913 at the age of 19, working as a steelworker, a paper worker, and a bakery truck driver. He attended Indiana State University from 1915-1919, studying history and sociology and was a founding member of the Communist Party of America in 1919. He went to work as the editor of *Darbas*, the Lithuanian-language organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers no. 54 in New York and served briefly as the Philadelphia District Organizer in the unified Communist Party in the fall of 1921, using the pseudonym “J. Mason.” In 1922 he was the Secretary of the Lithuanian Federation and editor of its organ, *Kova*. He also was the fraternal delegate of the Lithuanian Federation to the ill-fated Bridgman Unity Convention in the summer of that year. From 1922 he worked on the staff of the New York Lithuanian daily *Laisve*, becoming editor later in the 1920s and continuing at that post until his death in 1982 at the age of 88. Bimba was the author of a number of books, primarily in Lithuanian, but is best remembered for two titles translated into English and frequently reprinted by International Publishers: *The History of the American Working Class* (first published in 1927), and *The Molly Maguires* (1932).

self-sustaining institution financially without special appeals for financial help. Or, at least, these appeals can be minimized to such an extent that they may be necessary only in emergencies.

In my article sent to the *DW*, I made a suggestion that the comrades should establish an efficient machinery for doing outside jobs, such as printing of tickets, show cards, throwaways, leaflets, programs, etc. Then an appeal should be made to the party units and organizations under our influence that they should send their jobs to be done by the *Daily Worker's* printing establishment. If it is necessary, the CEC of the party should pass a decision that the units of the party must send their jobs to the party press.

We find from experience that this is a permanent and most important financial resource of the paper. The Lithuanian daily, as such, brings a deficit of thousands of dollars every year, but most of this deficit is being covered from the source mentioned above.

I think it is a crime to the movement when the party organizations right here in District no. 2 [New York] are paying thousands of dollars to private printing plants, or plants which are only very loosely connected with the communist movement, while at the same time this money can very easily be turned into the treasury of the *DW*, if there only was a desire to do so and common sense. I think that the CEC should take immediate steps and make a thorough investigation into the financial status of the *DW* and see if all the financial possibilities are properly exploited.

Until this day my article has not appeared in the *Daily Worker*. The editors [Louis Engdahl and Bill

Dunne] did not even have enough courtesy to let me know what had happened with it. If my suggestion, which is made with the best of intentions, is unacceptable, I at least am entitled to know about it.

I think that the editors of the *DW* are under wrong illusions and greatly injure the paper if they expect and accept only new subs and dollars from active members of the party and entirely ignore them when they want to cooperate in building up a communist English daily by their suggestions and writings. If their articles are not fit to be printed in the *DW*, the editors should at least have enough courage and sense to tell them so, but the meanest thing to do is ignore them.

If other comrades have the same experience with the *DW* as I have had, then no wonder that the entire paper and its magazine section is almost entirely written by the same few comrades, who seem to think that the daily is their private institution and that only they are communists.

I am writing this letter to you not for the purpose of making a complaint against somebody, but because I have at heart the *Daily Worker* and want to do my best to help it to become strong and powerful.

Yours for communism,

A. Bimba

A. Bimba,
46 Ten Eyck St.,
Brooklyn, NY.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

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