

# **STOP RHODESIAN IMPORTS! (ASBESTOS, CHROME, BERYLLIUM)**

## **IMPORTING ASBESTOS & CHROME SUPPORTS RACIST GOVERNMENT**

In Rhodesia a government representing the interests of the 5% white minority controls the country. While blacks make up 95% of the population they have no civil rights. The average wage for whites is about \$700 a month, for blacks about \$50 a month. U.S. importation of chrome helps keep this government in power.

## **IMPORTING RHODESIAN PRODUCTS HURTS U.S. WORKERS**

The Rhodesian government has used its policies of racial discrimination to keep the wages of African workers at a low level. This makes it very profitable for the big corporations in the U.S. to close down plants here and move to places like Rhodesia. Since 1971 two ferrochrome plants in the U.S. have been closed. And the companies use the threat of cheap foreign labor to fight demands for higher wages and benefits.

## **RHODESIAN ASBESTOS IS DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEALTH**

Asbestos is the major Rhodesian cargo unloaded in the port of Philadelphia. Working with asbestos exposes workers to lung cancer and mesotheliona (a highly fatal chest and abdomen cancer) and other cancer. These diseases occur in those who work with asbestos on a day to day basis such as Black Rhodesian mine workers, asbestos manufacture workers, and asbestos tile workers. Working with asbestos is also extremely dangerous to dock workers since small and short term exposure to asbestos can also cause cancer. Out of 500,000 Americans now or formerly working with asbestos, 100,000 will die of cancer, 35,000 will die of mesotheliona and 35,000 will die of asbestosis.

## **IMPORTING RHODESIAN GOODS IS LIKE IMPORTING CONTRABAND**

In 1966 and again in 1968 the U.N. imposed economic sanctions against the white, racist government of Rhodesia. In October, 1971 the U.S. Congress, moved by big business, voted to break these international laws. Importing Rhodesian asbestos is like importing contraband.

**Don't Unload Rhodesian Cargo —  
SUPPORT  
AFRICAN LIBERATION!**

# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN RHODESIA?

Rhodesia (called Zimbabwe by the Africans of that country), declared itself independent of Britain in 1965. The move took place after a long dispute about eventual majority rule in that country. The population is 95% African and 5% white. Most of the white settlers arrived only in this century: three quarters have lived in Zimbabwe less than 20 years. Nevertheless the Ian Smith regime which governs the country represents only the interests of the white minority. The laws of the country are saturated with racial discrimination against the blacks including strict racial laws on the ownership and even the use of land.

Several laws have been passed that make it impossible to carry out any political opposition without fear of police repression. Many political leaders are in jail or in detention camps in isolated areas of the country forbidden to communicate with anybody. Further legislation has been passed enforcing segregation of schools, public facilities and land. Major political parties have been banned and there is strict censorship of the press, radio and all other publications.

In 1965, when Britain insisted that the country move toward majority rule, the racist regime refused. Instead, it illegally declared itself independent to continue its racist policies.

Instead of taking the country by force, the international community supported Britain and the struggle for majority rule and self-determination by imposing trade restrictions with Rhodesia. At first, the United States complied with the sanctions but in 1971, the U.S. Congress, under the leadership of Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, passed a bill which permitted the U.S. to violate the sanctions and import "strategic" goods from Rhodesia.

The continued importation of Rhodesian products by the U.S. supports the illegal and racist regime in Rhodesia and makes the struggle for majority rule and self-determination more difficult.

The United States has been the biggest supporter of the illegal racist government in Zimbabwe. U.S. imports of asbestos, chrome and nickel have made it possible for the all-white minority government to survive.

Why has the U.S. followed this policy? Because big business has found it very profitable. Com-



*Demonstration in Philadelphia protesting importation of nickel from Rhodesia.*

panies like Union Carbide, Foote Mineral and Goodyear Rubber build plants and own mines in Zimbabwe. They make super profits because they pay African workers only a couple of dollars a day. Forced labor is often used. Any attempts of the workers to organize unions are brutally put down by the government police.

Big business and government working together to squeeze the workers. Sounds familiar - like Watergate, wage freezes, the Southern strategy and union busting right here in the U.S.

And it is no secret that companies are using countries like Zimbabwe against the U.S. workers. When large companies get away with paying lower wages to workers in one area, they use this to hold all wages down. They use imports produced by slave labor to threaten us and often they close down whole plants and move to countries where workers are forced to work for almost nothing. Union Carbide is doing this right now - moving its ferrochrome

division to Zimbabwe.

When we support the struggle of Africans in Zimbabwe for freedom, justice and human dignity we are fighting for our own interests, too. Our response must be solidarity with working people throughout the world against racism and exploitation, because while the companies get richer, our children and the children in Zimbabwe go hungry.

Many people in this country have already begun to fight against the chrome imports. When the first ship arrived in New Orleans, black students and longshoremen stopped it from being unloaded. Since then demonstrations have met most of the ships arriving from Zimbabwe.

International Longshoremen President, Thomas Gleason has endorsed the Rhodesian boycott, and in many cities local union longshoremen have refused to unload Rhodesian cargo.

The United Steelworkers Union has opposed the chrome imports "because of that nation's racist political, social and economic policies against its black African population." In Congress the Black Caucus has urged Nixon to "end all dealings with the illegal regime." Twenty-nine Senators have sponsored a bill to cut off trade with Rhodesia.

The response of U.S. companies has been to step up the importing of asbestos, chrome and nickel from Zimbabwe. So far the government has taken no action. Only people can force an end to these activities.



## WHAT WE CAN DO

Over the past year, mass support for a boycott of Rhodesian products has grown in cities across the nation. Longshoremen have made it very clear they do not want their labor to support slavery in Rhodesia by refusing to cross picket lines to unload Rhodesian cargo.

We urge Philadelphia longshoremen to refuse to unload Rhodesian cargo. Whenever ships come in we will be there to demonstrate our support.

The struggle of the Rhodesian people is our struggle, too. Imports from racist Rhodesia must be stopped.

## WHO WE ARE

The Coalition to Stop Rhodesian Imports is a group of people from the Philadelphia area, - - Black, white and Puerto Rican, - - both working people and students, united to stop Rhodesian imports.

For more information, call: LO 3-9372 Ext. 93 or 94 until 5 pm.

After 5 pm call GA 3-3161 or 222-2758.



*Black students from Louisiana's Southern University demonstrate against U.S. imports of Rhodesian chrome, March 1972.*