
From: Philadelphia Coalition to Stop Rhodesian Imports
To: All other coalitions

On Mar. 21, the African Sun arrived at Packer Marine Terminal, carrying, according to our information, Rhodesian asbestos. Although it was raining too heavily for longshoremen to work, 15-20 pickets distributed leaflets and carried signs. Both the Sun and Neptune had been picketed on their last visits to Philadelphia. Groups represented by the pickets included October 4th Organization, Philadelphia Free Press, Peoples Fund, Revolutionary Union, and Philadelphia Workers Organizing Committee.

On Mar. 22, in good weather, 5 pickets showed up. Although we had personal contact at this time with two longshoremen, we had difficulty finding out if the ship was being unloaded. We were prevented by company men from approaching the docks and had to remain on the street. Philadelphia Civil Disobedience squad officers were on the scene, as well as company police.

Around 8 AM an official of the shipping company showed us one xeroxed page which he contended was the manifest. It did not show any products we generally identify as Rhodesian (asbestos, chrome, nickel), and identified the products only by port of embarkation, not country of origin (Rhodesia is landlocked). We told him we didn't trust him and would not remove the picket line.

At noon we received definite word that of four crews assigned to the boat, three were refusing to work and the fourth had agreed to load cargo only. We were assured by dockers that it would not be unloaded that afternoon, but that an attempt might be made to unload it Saturday, and that it might be advisable to have a picket line.

On Saturday morning, pickets arrives and found that the Sun had departed, without being unloaded. Around 9 AM the Neptune arrived, and longshoremen asked us if it should be unloaded. We told them that we had no advance information and could not say. The picket line disbanded at that time. We were informed that afternoon that the ship had been carrying Rhodesian goods, and that it was not unloaded. Rank and file longshoremen will be attending the next coalition steering committee meeting, and will be helping to plan for the mass educational meeting Apr. 7 at 7:30 PM Friends Meeting House, 4th and Arch Sts., Philadelphia.

Please send us a report whenever you have a ship come in.

We will try to keep you posted in the same way. Mail to
Jerry Silberman
3143 N. Broad St.
Philadelphia, Penna. 19132