The American Committee on Africa has called on the United States Olympic Committee to withdraw the U. S. Olympic team from participation in the 1972 Olympic Games, which open in Munich, Germany on August 26, if athletes from illegal minority-ruled Rhodesia (named Zimbabwe by its black majority) compete. The summer's events, mainly track and field, will lose some of their most exciting competitors if Ethiopia and Kenya withdraw, as they have said they will if Rhodesia participates; and with them, most African nations will withdraw.

ACOA now calls upon the United Nations, and especially for leadership by the Sanctions Committee, to use whatever influence it has to stop this form of international recognition of the racist Rhodesian regime and the acceptance of racism in international sports.

The Olympic recognition of Rhodesia is based on a fraud. No country in the world has recognized Rhodesia as a nation, and the majority of the people in that country emphatically rejected continuation of the present regime in a British-sponsored test last year. The International Olympic Committee has accepted it under cover of the British team despite the protest of the British government, because the team has agreed to use the British colonial flag of Southern Rhodesia and to rise for "God Save the Queen".

Similarly, the facade of a multiracial team (seven blacks out of 44 competitors) has been accepted by the International Olympic Committee to cover up the reality of racist segregation in Rhodesia. Black athletes, drawn from a 95% majority, have separate and inferior training facilities, and not enough for many potential athletes. De facto segregation exists in local sports organizations which again limits the opportunities of black athletes, and the creation of "European areas" is increasing such limitations. If Rhodesia were a nation, it could not meet Olympic standards of nonracialism.

The International Olympic Committee's defense that it is removing political questions from sports is in fact an acceptance of the politics of racism. As in South Africa, which is now barred from Olympic participation, so in Rhodesia color and competence rules sports because of the racist bias of the government.
Statement by the ACOA
Protesting Participation of Rhodesia
(Zimbabwe) in the 1972 Olympics: (2)

We call on the United Nations to help clarify and change the situation. It should:

* Congratulate the African nations for their leadership in withdrawing from the Olympics.

* Urge other nations to follow their example.

* Protest the West German government's acceptance of Olympic "identity cards" to get around the issue raised by Rhodesian passports, which are not accepted by member nations of the U. N. under the sanctions policy, and ask that government to respect U. N. decisions by not admitting Rhodesians, and sending home any who have been admitted.

* Call on the International Olympic Committee to recognize its own and internationally accepted principles rejecting racism, and so to reject the so-called Rhodesian team.

* Offer its congratulations and support to any athletes who may, as individuals, withdraw if their national Olympic Committees fail to protest the participation of Rhodesia.

Concerted action by all nations, even at this late date, could deny the illegal Rhodesian regime the international recognition it will receive if it participates in the Olympic Games. It is Rhodesia that must withdraw, rather than the nations which refuse to sanction racism. This would avert further violations of U. N. sanctions and of the principles of the U. N. Charter. Instead of breaking faith with the heroic people of Zimbabwe, it might turn the corner to renewed action to support them.