



BASIC FACTS ON FIRESTONE IN LIBERIA

A HISTORY OF EXPLOITATION:

The Firestone Tire and Rubber Company has operated the world's largest rubber plantation in the world in Harbel, Liberia for over 80 years. Firestone signed a concession agreement with the government of Liberia to lease over one million acres of land in 1926 for 6 cents per acre for a period of 99 years. In 2005, Firestone signed a new 37-year agreement with a transitional government in Liberia to lease the land for 50 cents per acre. All rubber produced in Liberia is sent to the United States for processing into tires and no processing or manufacturing is done in Liberia.

FIRESTONE USES CHILD LABOR:

Firestone workers must tap trees in order to extract the latex necessary for making rubber tires. The rubber tappers must meet a daily production quota or their already low wages will be halved. By Firestone Natural Rubber Company CEO Dan Adomitis' own admission on CNN, it would take over 21 hours to meet the quota. As a result, tappers are forced to bring their children and wives to work. Children are forced to carry two 70 pound buckets of rubber on their shoulders for miles. Tappers and their children must apply toxic pesticides without protection.

FIRESTONE KEEPS WORKERS IN TERRIBLE CONDITIONS:

Firestone workers in Liberia live in cramped shacks which have not been renovated since the 1920s and lack electricity, running water and indoor latrines. Meanwhile, Firestone managers have huge houses with all modern conveniences and even golf courses! Educational and health facilities are understaffed and lacking resources and are often located much too far from housing units for workers and their families to access. Additionally, Firestone uses the labor of a large number of subcontractors who are not offered benefits. Historically, Firestone has negotiated with a union that is not democratic or independent from the management. In July 2007, the first free and fair union elections were held in the plantation's history, but it took five months, a two week strike, a Supreme Court lawsuit and international outcry for Firestone to recognize the elected union leadership. The union is currently negotiating a new collective bargaining agreement with Firestone management.

FIRESTONE DUMPS TOXIC CHEMICALS ON THE COMMUNITY:

As the Environmental Protection Agency of Liberia recently confirmed, Firestone dumps toxic chemicals into local rivers, like the Farmington River, used by the community for bathing and fishing. The pollution has caused serious health problems for communities surrounding the plantation and has killed off some forms of river life.

80 YEARS OF EXPLOITATION IS ENOUGH! STOP FIRESTONE!

www.StopFirestone.org