



PCUSA STATEMENT ON BERYLLIUM AND URANIUM EXPOSURE IN THE ARMS MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY: A CLASS ORIENTED APPROACH IS NEEDED TO PROTECT WORKERS' HEALTH AND HALT WEAPONS PRODUCTION

Donald Trump's first Executive action was to de-regulate protections for workers. His outrageous Executive Order requiring elimination of two worker protections for every worker protection regulation that is added, is a clear, defining message from Trump that he is 100% in the pocket of big business and the arms manufacturers. One of the OSHA regulations that Trump and his anti-worker gang are trying to eliminate, is the OSHA standard that protects workers who work with the highly toxic substance, Beryllium.



Beryllium has many uses, particularly in weapons production. Beryllium is a metal that is lighter than aluminum, and stronger than steel. It is also highly toxic, and once workers are exposed to it, either through the air or through contact with the skin, Beryllium causes permanent, irreversible damage to the lungs and respiratory system. Beryllium exposure causes a condition known as Chronic Beryllium Disease (CBD) that is a debilitating disease of the lungs. Beryllium exposure in weapons production is accompanied by exposure to uranium, which has both chemical and radiological toxicity with the two important target organs being the kidneys and the lungs. Health consequences are determined by the physical and chemical nature of the depleted uranium to which an individual is exposed, and to the level and Duration of exposure.

SOURCE MATERIALS:

<http://www.who.int/ipcs/publications/cicad/en/cicad32.pdf?ua=1>

http://www.who.int/ionizing_radiation/pub_meet/en/DU_Eng.pdf

<https://beryllium.com/uses-and-applications/defense-and-security>

The two parties of monopoly capitalism, the Democrats and Republicans, worship war and military spending. Along the way,



they corrupt the minds of workers and promote hatred among peoples. It has been suggested that the leaders of these parties are addicts, that they are addicted to war. The truth is that the capitalist economic and social system that these parties represent cannot exist without war and conquest. As an alternative to capitalist barbarity, to save lives and protect workers' health, we call for a halt to all uses of beryllium and uranium forthwith.

The oxide of this chemical element is an excellent heat conductor as well as a good electrical insulator. It is often used as an insulator base plate, in high power transistors for telecommunication purposes. It is also used in ceramics and nuclear applications as it has a very high melting point. Research is going on to find the use of beryllium oxide in increasing the thermal conductivity of uranium dioxide nuclear fuel pellets.

*PCUSA does not see any benefit to the working class resulting from this costly and dangerous research.

The Peace & Solidarity Commission of PCUSA is addressing this problem because we maintain, based on scientific evidence, that beryllium and uranium exposure are *unnecessarily compromising workers' health*, and that arms production must be halted in the interests of peace, and the sustainability of life on earth. We call on all democratic, anti-imperialist forces to demand that the Trump administration reverse its Executive Order on de-regulation of worker health and safety, and we call on all trade unionists to join with the Labor United in Class Struggle caucus / Labor Today and the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) to launch a comprehensive, militant public safety awareness campaign on the dangers of beryllium and uranium exposure in the workplace. We believe that worker education and militancy are the best defense against the abuses of Executive power by Donald Trump.

If you are interested in joining our campaign against beryllium and uranium please contact us directly at (716) 603-8640 or e-mail us: info@partyofcommunistsusa.org