

COLOMBIA
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SOLIDARITY
CAMPAIGN

THE ANTI-COKE MANIFESTO



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Why You Should Support The Boycott Campaign.

THE ANTI-COKE MANIFESTO

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ENSLAVING ITS WORKERS

“We, the workers on the Caribbean Coast declare we are facing employer intransigence against our demands for the HUMANISATION OF WORK IN COCA-COLA and against the miserable conditions of PRECARIOUS LABOUR to which thousands of workers subcontracted through employment agencies, ‘preco-operatives’ and ‘associated work co-operatives’ are condemned.

On 18th May 2005 we commemorate the tenth anniversary of a strike on the North Coast in which, working with the complicity of the Ministry of Labour, the employer sacked twelve thousand employed workers. Now they are replaced by workers in various forms of sub-contracted slavery, to which 95% of the workforce is subject. The working conditions are inhuman, having to complete working days longer than 12 hours, without social security and on marginal wages that are not enough for a family.

Because of these conditions in which our comrades subsist, we have demanded stability of employment and dignified conditions where the workers’ human rights are respected. But the response was that these men and women are not workers and therefore the corporation has no commitment to them.

Our human rights as workers are systematically violated, with assassinations, disappearances, targeting, torture, exile, terrorism, mass sackings, death threats as part of a bloody policy to eliminate the union and rob the workers’ rights. Our demands for justice have not been met in Colombia, and so we have taken recourse to international justice to condemn the inferno visited upon Colombian workers. We especially call on those who are at the service of internationalism to create an international mo-

vement in solidarity with our cause and, through a Worldwide Campaign, approve the boycott against the Multinational so that it respects the Human Rights of workers and consumers.

Whilst it spoils the conditions of life for its workers, the media reports that Coca-Cola made multi-million profits in 2004, more than 163,000 million pesos, making it one of the most profitable companies in Colombia. The media also reports the corporation making a donation of 23,000 million pesos to the Coca-Cola Foundation with the sophism that the money s for social programmes, when we know that it is to finance the campaign to RE-ELECT URIBE.”

FOR THE HUMANISATION OF WORK AND AGAINST
PRECARIOUS LABOUR IN COCA COLA! LONG LIVE OUR
JUST DEMANDS!

SINALTRAINAL, 18th May 2005

AN ANTI-COKE MANIFESTO

by Andy Higginbottom, Secretary Colombia Solidarity Campaign ¹

At a special presentation on 11th November 2004 Coca-Cola Corporation’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Neville Isdell unveiled to Wall Street analysts *The Coca-Cola Manifesto for Change*, the corporation’s two-year master plan to improve its flagging profits. Flanked by Chuck Fruit, the company’s unfortunately named chief marketing officer and other executives, Isdell presented a new marketing strategy to target sales expansion into the very biggest countries (India, Brazil, China and Russia). During 2005 Coca-Cola will add \$400 million to the \$1 billion it already spends on marketing outside the US. Coca-Cola spent \$2.2 billion on worldwide advertising in 2004, and its executives admitted that they have commissioned scores of agencies in the search for new ideas.

They call it ‘iconic marketing’, to promote the core qualities of ‘uplifting refreshment, stubborn optimism and universal connections’ that they believe consumers associate with company products. Isdell claimed the essence of the Coke brand is that it is ‘a decent thing, honestly made’. ²

Decency and honesty are not the words that first spring to mind with regard to Coca-Cola Corporation, but then fact and fiction are easily confused by a multinational that spends \$7 million a day on advertising for unnecessary consumption. The truth is that Coca-Cola’s problems run much deeper than reviving a tired icon: the corporation’s celebrated publicity machine is struggling to recover from a series of PR blunders such as the fateful UK launch of its Dasani bottled water (it turned out to come from

the mains supply and was in any case withdrawn as potentially carcinogenic) ³ *because it has an underlying credibility issue that will not go away.* Coca-Cola's very claims to universalism and decency have been rocked by sustained allegations of human rights abuses and environmental destruction in Third World countries. These are not just 'PR disasters' - surely a devaluation of the term 'disaster' - but real disasters for the usually ignored 'unpeople' living in the South of our planet.⁴ Moreover, the victims of Coke's abuses are finding a sympathetic hearing amongst those in the global North already fed up with being taken for a ride by the corporation.

This pamphlet summarises the charges levelled against Coca-Cola operations in Colombia and India, looks at how the corporation has responded and evaluates that response.

ASSASSINATIONS OF WORKERS IN COLOMBIA

Discussions of Coca-Cola tend to focus on its brand image, yet the biggest spin of all is the immaculate conceptual presence of Coke as a pre-given element of consumption, something that emerges and is ever available as if by magic. A can or bottle of drink is not just an incarnation of expert marketing, but the result of a collective production and distribution labour process. It is time for a rare public appearance of someone kept invisible for long periods of time: the worker who produces Coca-Cola.

His name is Isidro Segundo Gil. Isidro worked at the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Carepa in the far north Urabá region of Antioquia department in Colombia, towards the border with Panama. Isidro was assassinated inside the Carepa plant at 9am on 5th December 1996. He was a leader of the local branch of the food and drink workers union SINALTRAINAL (Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Industria de Alimentos) which had one week earlier tabled the union's demands in the annual negotiation round with the bottling company. He was shot dead by right-wing paramilitaries, the fourth union member at the Carepa plant they had assassinated since 1994. Plant manager Ariosto Mosquera stated shortly beforehand that he wanted to 'sweep away the trade union'. After murdering Isidro the paramilitaries burnt out the local union office and took possession of it. Two days later they re-entered the plant, called the workers together and made them sign prepared letters resigning from the union, the rest of the local union leaders were given three days to get out of town. According to eye witnesses the letters had been printed on company machines and were collected in by the management. The union branch was indeed decimated, in all fourteen activists and their families had to flee Carepa, over thirty members resigned from the union. Technical manager of the plant and union

member, 65 year old José Herrera was forced out of the plant assassinated by paramilitaries on 26th December 1996 and, after a four year battle to get justice for her murdered partner, Isidro's wife Alcira del Carmen Herera Perez was murdered in front of their daughters. The Carepa plant was run by *Bebidas y Alimentos*, a US company owned by the Kirby family based in Key Biscayne, Florida. ⁵

Isidro's assassination is the most egregious crime in an extraordinary catalogue of violations suffered by union members. In all nine workers have been assassinated, three local leaders of SINALTRAINAL at the Bucaramanga bottling plant were imprisoned for sixth months under false charges of terrorism, union activists at the plant in Cúcuta have suffered a series of shootings, beatings, kidnappings and intimidations, and local leaders in Barrancabermeja have been the target of threats and assassination attempts by the main paramilitary group the AUC.⁶ Increasingly it is family members who are the victims, as in the attempted kidnapping of a 4 year old daughter of one union leader, the actual kidnapping of the 15 year old son of another, and then on 20th April 2004 the assassination of the brother-in-law, sister-in-law and nephew of another. ⁷

Many more incidents suggest that managers in Coke's Colombia bottling plants have been working in collusion with the paramilitaries. The most prominent was when the weekly magazine *Cambio* reported that Ramón Isaza the paramilitary chief of the Magdalena Medio region had sought a 'debt repayment' from Coca-Cola's main bottling company in Colombia, Panamco. On 15th August 1998 Panamco executives flew to Monteria where, according to *Cambio's* sources, they met national AUC paramilitary chief Carlos Castaño and persuaded him to overrule Isaza's extortion demand. ⁸

Other incidents are less well known, yet almost routine:

- The AUC published death threats against William Mendoza and Luis Alberto Diaz in the Barrancabermeja publication *La Noticia* on 12th August 2001. When these two union activists arrived for their work shift on Christmas Eve 2001 they found AUC greeting cards in their lockers inside the plant. ⁹

- US journalist Steven Dudley wrote in August 2002 that 'Paramilitary leaders have told me on several occasions they protect business interests in Colombia, especially international companies . . . throughout Colombia they have established bases near Coca-Cola bottling facilities.' ¹⁰

- On 2nd October 2002 Saul Rincón, a known paramilitary, and another man were seen monitoring a union protest at the entrance to the Barrancabermeja plant; the two men then entered and talked with plant managers. On 5th October Rincón warned that local SINALTRAINAL leader Juan Carlos Galvis was an assassination target, and on 8th October he was discovered carrying out surveillance in Galvis's home district. Galvis was fired at by several paramilitary assailants on 22nd August 2003, but managed to survive. Rincón was arrested for homicide in a different case on 22nd June 2004. ¹¹

- According to witnesses, Panamco official Jhon Ordonez makes payments on the 28th of each month to paramilitary leaders in Cúcuta. On 13th January 2003, paramilitary forces announced that, on instructions from management, 'they intended to kill members of SINALTRAINAL because they were interfering with the business of the Coca-Cola bottler at the Barranquilla facility.' ¹²

There is an obvious method to this madness, union-busting. SINALTRAINAL reports 179 human rights violations against its members between 1990 and 2003. The data shows that the threats, beatings and assassinations mostly occur against local union representatives in the periods immediately prior to and during annual negotiations on collective agreements. According to incidents recorded by SINALTRAINAL, the violence against Coca-Cola workers increased dramatically in 1994/1995, and again in 1997/1998. In 1993 the union had 1,440 members in Coke plants, by 2004 this had fallen to just 389 members.¹³

The drastic fall in the Coca-Cola workers' rate of unionisation from over 15 per cent in 1990 to about 6 per cent in 2003 is more pronounced than the average national trend, which includes public sector as well as private sector trade unionism. The evidence suggests that SINALTRAINAL's struggle represents in microcosm the experience of Colombian workers employed by multinational corporations, most of whom have eliminated trade unions altogether. To outline the context, the UN economic research unit ECLAC distinguishes four types of investment strategy adopted by multinationals in Latin America: *raw materials seeking* (to exploit natural resources), *market access seeking* (privatisations, private company market competition and takeovers), *efficiency seeking* (essentially cost cutting) and *technical knowledge seeking* (the appropriation of biodiversity and genetic coding as corporately owned assets). ECLAC's approach is to advise governments to shape their policies according to what type of investment they want to encourage. Thus, in broad outline, Mexican governments have encouraged 'efficiency-seeking capital' into the *maquiladora* sector, Brazil and Argentina pushed through drastic privatisation policies to attract 'market access seeking capital', and government policies in the Andean countries have been aligned towards 'raw materials-seeking capital'.¹⁴

What emerges from this way of framing the investigation is an understanding of the conditions when multinational corporations may be involved in human rights violations, and a prediction of the form that the violations might take. Unless counteracted, profit maximising drives each of the investment strategies towards characteristic harmful behaviours. Thus, for example, 'raw materials-seeking capital' generally involves competition for the land, which in Colombia has triggered a process of dispossession, the forcible displacement of peasants as well as indigenous and African descendent communities that are settled in areas of interest to the multinationals.

The Coca-Cola Corporation's strategy in a mature market such as Colombia where it has had a presence since 1942 is focused on improving the efficiency of its investment. Since at least the early 1990s there have been three elements present that have combined to encourage an aggressive implementation of an 'efficiency seeking' investment strategy. The first has been the state's policies embodied in a framework of legislation, the second is the corporation's own strategy, and the third is the socialisation of class based violence. In Colombia neoliberalism as an economic model - identified especially by the policies of privatisation, deregulation and the 'flexibilisation' of labour - was imposed from 1990 onwards. In that year two labour laws were passed, law 50 for the private sector and law 60 covering the public sector. This occurred just three years after the formation of a militant, secular trade union centre called the CUT. In 1980 union membership was some 3 million workers, 25 years later union membership has fallen to less than a million, and almost all of that in the public sector. Law 50 dispensed with nearly every legal protection for permanent employment contracts, which encouraged subcontracting and temporary working. As a result there are very few private industry trade unions left.

The second element is an aggressive corporate employment strategy that has taken advantage of the legal environment. The mechanisms of sub-contracting play a major part in this. In 1990 the 'Coca-Cola system' in Colombia employed over twelve thousand workers, of whom nine thousand had permanent employment contracts. By 2001 there were only two thousand five hundred direct employees, and by the beginning of 2005 less than a thousand workers had stable employment contracts. The workforce employed in the 'Coca-Cola system' in Colombia is still nearly ten thousand workers, but 90 per cent of these are now 'flexible' workers, employed indirectly through various forms of sub-contracting. The principal level of sub-contracting is with bottling plant franchisees. Until 2003 there were 20 bottling plants but as part of a worldwide implementation of new techniques bottling production is now concentrated in just 5 mega-plants (plus continuing production in Carepa), with the remainder being reduced to distribution centres. This is but the latest round in a continuing world-wide Coke strategy to reduce its labour force.¹⁵

The third element is class-based violence through the use of right-wing paramilitary squads and direct state repression. The phenomenon of paramilitarism is not unique to Colombia; it was present in the 1980s in Guatemala during the civil war counterinsurgency that claimed 150,000 lives, many trade unionists amongst them. But it has been particularly prevalent in Colombia where human rights NGOs attribute to the paramilitaries at least 80 per cent of the annual toll of about 6,000 socio-political assassinations outside of armed combat; and they link the paramilitary groups to the official military apparatus, evidencing a state policy of 'dirty war' against the social movements and political opponents.¹⁶

Further sub-contracting at Coke's bottling plants is carried out through small employment agencies misleadingly known as cooperatives. Rather than receiving a wage from the bottling company, casualised workers are paid a lesser amount, usually at the minimum wage level or just below, by their cooperative to which they belong which in turn invoices the bottler for the labour services provided. The difference between the two being the profit margin for the cooperative, which have thus become a target for takeover by the paramilitaries. The sub-contracting of violence goes hand in hand with sub-contracting the workforce, and is just as calculated.

INDIA: GET RID OF COCA-COLA, SAVE WATER

A second test of Coca-Cola's honesty and decency is how it treats communities around its bottling plants in India, where the corporation's appropriation of water as a natural resource is the fundamental issue. Here we introduce another forgotten actor: *the communities in which Coca-Cola plants are located.*

The stories of six communities fighting Coca-Cola are well reported by the India Resource Centre, whose co-ordinator Amit Srivastava points out four broad categories of harm: Coke plants are taking ground water from surrounding farming communities; the plants' output pollutes the diminished remaining water supplies; Coke bottling plants in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh have been spreading toxic waste (cadmium and lead) onto surrounding land; and the bottled products themselves carry a dangerously high pesticide content (DDT, lindane and malathion) up to thirty times higher than US and European health standards. Farmers in Andhra Pradesh and Chattisgarh are even spraying Coca-Cola on their crops as it is 'more cost-effective than using other branded pesticides'.¹⁷

It takes 9 litres of water to manufacture 1 litre of Coca-Cola. The effect of Coke's plants is to monopolise water supplies, dispossessing tens of thousands of already poor peasants from water access and so destroying their means of subsistence. It is not only livelihoods, but the very right to life that is under threat. The resistance has been driven from deep within the communities, with women coming to the fore. 15th January 2005 marked the 1000th day of a permanent *dharna* (vigil) by local community groups in front of the Coca-Cola plant in Plachimada in the southern state of Kerala. The Plachimada plant has been shut down since March 2004. Although Coke say they closed it voluntarily

this is not true, they were obliged to suspend production due to the decision of first the Kerala state government to ease drought conditions in the area, and then the ruling by the *panchayat* (village council) not to renew Coca-Cola's license to operate, a decision that the corporation has appealed.¹⁸

Plachimada and the other communities in resistance have put Coca-Cola under international scrutiny.¹⁹ However the grass roots struggle is the dynamo, communities have developed their resources of mobilisation against the multinational. The outside world has learnt of vigils and hunger strikes; the sit-in on 5th June 2004 by over two thousand people in Kaladera, Rajasthan shouting the slogan '*Get rid of Coca-Cola, Save Water*'; the November 2004 march from the Coke plant in Balia to Mehdiganj in Uttar Pradesh that was attacked by armed police who arrested 350 people; the defiant rally of community residents outside the Mehdiganj plant.²⁰ Srivastava draws a parallel with Colombia, highlighting that 'Coca-Cola acts with impunity, and violence is an inherent part of how Coca-Cola does business around the world.'²¹

The issue here is corporate domination of natural resources. The battles for water in India are an example of what Vandana Shiva calls 'the globalization of inhuman rights', that is the form of economic globalization that 'places the rights of corporations above the rights of states and citizens'. She argues that this leads to 'food fascism', multinationals' monopolistic control over food production and distribution is killing off the cultural diversity of indigenous products. There is a striking convergence with the thinking of SINALTRAINAL, the union argues for a policy of national food sovereignty and would prefer natural fruit alternatives to commercial fizzy drinks.²² A common agenda is beginning to emerge, it has to be heard.

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO STOP COKE'S ABUSES

SINALTRAINAL projected a two track international effort to stop the assassination of its members. The first track is a civil action court case in the US, and the second is a campaign of publicity and mobilization.

A civil action on behalf of the SINALTRAINAL victims was lodged by lawyers of the United Steelworkers of America and the International Labor Rights Fund with the Florida southern district court (Miami) on 20th July 2001, under the 1789 Alien Tort Claims Act. The claim is for relief and damages due to a campaign of violence committed by paramilitaries employed by Coca-Cola's bottlers in Colombia, and is against the Coca-Cola Company, Panamco, Bebidas and its named directors.²³ In a ruling on 31st March 2003, the US District Court Judge found that the allegations were sufficient 'to allow the case to proceed on a theory that the paramilitaries were acting in a symbiotic relationship with the Colombian government'. The cases brought by SINALTRAINAL could go forward against Panamco and Bebidas, but the claims against Coca-Cola and its Colombia subsidiary were dismissed 'on the ground that the company's bottling agreement did not explicitly give Coca-Cola control over labor relations issues of its Colombian bottlers'.²⁴ This ruling is strange, as for some reason Coca-Cola did not provide a copy of the actual agreement it has with the Colombian bottlers, rather an example generic Bottler Agreement. SINALTRAINAL appealed Coca-Cola's removal from the case, indeed circumstances have since changed and the parent corporation is more involved than ever in what happens in the bottling plants (see below).

Meantime, SINALTRAINAL opened up a front of international

solidarity based on mobilisation. Working with support groups the union organized three 'Popular Public Hearings' in Atlanta (July 2002), Brussels (October 2002) and Bogotá (December 2002) to which Coca-Cola was invited, but did not attend. The idea to boycott Coke products arose during this process. Having failed to get a positive response from the corporation, the union considered it had little option but to increase the campaign profile even more, the call for an international consumer boycott was issued at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in January 2003. The boycott would not start for several months, giving time for Coca-Cola to respond constructively. But there was no such movement from the employer, and so the call not to consume Coca-Cola products was duly launched by SINALTRAINAL and Colombia's main union federation, the CUT, on 22nd July 2003 in Bogotá matched by public events in several countries - the Colombia Solidarity Campaign held a Coke-free samba party in London's Piccadilly Circus.

SINALTRAINAL makes clear that the boycott of Coke products is a tactic, not a long-term strategy. The idea is to get Coca-Cola to seriously engage with the union in saving its members' lives. The boycott's objectives are summarised as:

- '1. That Coca Cola mitigates the pain of the victims; that is why we the social organisations who have formed the campaign have, since 11th February, been presenting a proposal for integrated reparations that include the minimum demands that the transnational pays compensation for the damages caused.
2. That Coca Cola publicly recognises that it benefited from the crimes committed by paramilitary groups continually carried out against the human rights of the workers and the communities.

3. That the transnational commits itself to not making any new attacks on our people, and that it hands over to justice those criminals who carried out actions to its benefit.'²⁶

A key area is North America, where the Campaign to *Stop Killer Coke* has animated student and union activism, education and protests leading to the withdrawal of contracts at thirteen universities and vending machines from many union branches, and a high profile intervention by campaign director Ray Rogers at Coca-Cola's 2004 annual meeting. Students have thrown Coke products out of thirteen colleges and universities.²⁷ Another dimension has been opened up in the US by the campaign to get soda drinks out of schools on health grounds, a head on challenge to the drinks corporations for whom 'the school system is where you build brand loyalty', as acknowledged by John Alm, president of Coca-Cola Enterprises.²⁸

The two European countries where the boycott has been taken up most enthusiastically so far are Ireland and Italy. On 11th October 2003 the John Hewitt bar and restaurant in Belfast became the first public house in Ireland to remove Coca-Cola from sale, as did the Irish language cultural centre *Cultúrlann McAdaimh Ó Fiaich*. Students of University College Dublin (UCD) the largest campus in Ireland, voted in a referendum on 13th and 14th October 2003 not to serve Coca-Cola in any student union outlet. Despite the efforts of a strange alliance of right-wing students and officials from the trade union Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU) who had circulated slick publicity with the slogans '*Enjoy choice ... Enjoy Coca Cola*' and '*Choice is your right. Coca-Cola is your right*', UCD students voted in favour of the boycott not once, but twice. Coca-Cola sent its Director of Communications for Latin America Rafael Fernandez Quiros to try and persuade UCD students against their decision,

and the corporation invited students to a slap-up meal, but these tactics only ended up rallying support in favour of the boycott, that was endorsed a month later with an increased majority in a second referendum. UCD students did exercise their choice, by supporting human rights.²⁹

The issue continues to be sharply debated in the Irish media, trade unions and political movements. Example one, proceedings at the April 2004 national conference of primary school teachers union Irish National Teachers Organisation were interrupted by a delegate who raised under standing orders an objection to Coca-Cola sponsorship of the conference, including its stall in the foyer from which free products were being distributed. A year later the same organisation voted to break all links with Coke. Example two, students at Maynooth college voted not to ban Coke. It was subsequently revealed that the main anti-boycott campaigner is the son of former Taoiseach (Irish prime minister) John Bruton, who had received fees from Coca-Cola for speaking engagements.³⁰ Example three, students at Trinity College Dublin voted for the boycott in February 2004, this was followed by a decision of the SIPTU branch representing over 550 security, cleaning, catering, secretarial, computer and other non-academic staff at Trinity to disinvest any union funds invested in Coca-Cola. Example four, the 2005 congress of the Union of Students in Ireland (40 member colleges and representing over 250,000 students) backed the boycott of both Coke and Nestlé.³¹

In Italy, Rome's mayor organized an event on 13th December 2003 where Coke was asked to respond to SINALTRAINAL. Nicola Raffa, Director of External Relations for Coca-Cola Italia Ltd. tried to evade responsibility, but admitted that Coke has a code of conduct that should be implemented by bottlers using its brand name. Municipal authorities in Rome's District 11 and the

town of Empoli in Tuscany have voted to join the boycott, as have eleven other municipalities. In March 2005 the Academic Senate of Roma 3 University voted to remove all soda drinks from vending machines on campus.³²

There have been similar initiatives in Germany, Turkey, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Switzerland and Australia. In the UK the solidarity campaign had by mid-2004 gained pockets of support, notably from the Scottish Socialist Party which hosted SINALTRAINAL member Luis Eduardo Garcia in the Scottish parliament, from public sector union UNISON which voted to support the boycott in June 2004, and activist students in several colleges (including SOAS, Bristol, Middlesex, Stirling, Sussex). Journalist and comedian Mark Thomas took up the case in the *New Statesman*. He and artist Tracey Sanders-Wood added a fresh take when they launched the 'Coke's Nazi Adverts' exhibition, on the premise that since Coke was not revealing what adverts it used when collaborating with Hitler's regime, the general public would be invited to submit their reconstructions of what the adverts might have looked like. The show was truly democratic, all entries from school children to known graphic designers in the display, and a great success with hundreds of entries being shown in two London galleries, and later in a Bogotá social centre.³³ Following this, Mark Thomas integrated the story of Coke into his stage show that traveled the length and breadth of the UK in the latter half of 2004. He had visited India and Colombia and communicated these experiences. In one of the show's features, 'Coke Facts', Thomas and his researcher swap nuggets of information they have dug up on the corporation. Tens of thousands laughed out loud at these performances, imaginative dissent had been turned on Coke, and it was beginning to feel the pressure.

COKE DENIES RESPONSIBILITY, AND STIGMATISES ITS CRITICS

Although Coca-Cola's stance is riddled with inconsistencies, there have been two constants in its position: denial of responsibility, and repeated attempts to stigmatise SINALTRAINAL and the Indian communities in dispute with it.

The corporation's first line of defence against charges of complicity in the assassinations is that the corporation is not responsible for the actions of its bottling companies 'all of which are independently owned businesses'.³⁴ The use of the word 'independent' here is contrary to all normal interpretation. Workers who apply for a job at any bottling plant fill in a Coca-Cola standard application form, they wear a Coca-Cola logo on their uniforms, and they work with standard Coca-Cola products according to Coca-Cola work practices. All franchisees have to sign a Bottler's Agreement with detailed quality controls. As the court action against Coca-Cola points out, the corporation suspended its agreement with a franchisee in Guatemala when three trade unionists were assassinated, and appointed a replacement franchisee, 'Coke's action was the result of a massive public campaign against the company, but its action, however motivated, shows specifically that Coke has the control to prevent and/or remedy violence against workers and trade union leaders in its foreign bottling plants.'³⁵

Panamco Colombia is a subsidiary of Miami based Panamerican Beverages Inc, (Panamco), one of Coke's strategic 'anchor bottlers', that owned 17 out of the 20 plants in Colombia, including in Bucaramanga, Barrancabermeja and Cúcuta - where many of the abuses have taken place. Panamco was in turn 24 per cent owned by Coca-Cola Company, a controlling interest. Then in

December 2002 another company in the Coke system, Coca-Cola FEMSA announced it would buy Panamco for \$3.6 billion. This acquisition was completed six months later and involved the parent Coca-Cola Company receiving 304 million shares of Coca-Cola FEMSA worth \$674 million in exchange for its Panamco shares, leaving it with a 39.6 per cent shareholding and 46 per cent of the voting stock of combined entity Coca-Cola Femsa-Panamco.³⁶

The merged Coca-Cola FEMSA-Panamco is the leading bottler of Coca-Cola products in Latin America, handling about 10 per cent of Coca-Cola's worldwide sales, the second-largest Coca-Cola bottler (the largest is Atlanta-based Coca-Cola Enterprises). The merger was seen as complementary in two respects. Geographically, FEMSA already dominated the Mexican and Argentine markets. Panamco brought with it leading positions in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. As far as product lines are concerned, FEMSA was already strong in beer as well as soft drinks in Mexico, where there is an especially high consumption of soft drinks due to lack of adequate drinking water. With even limited public services breaking down, and with privatisations, failure to provide drinking water from the tap is a continental issue. The sale of bottled alternatives to publicly available water is an expanding market with the potential to increase even more rapidly. So access to the water market was part of the attraction of Panamco, and perhaps why FEMSA paid so much for it. As industry analyst Milton Boki noted, 'the purchase of Panamco opens the possibility of using its enormous distribution and marketing system to sell bottled water and other soft drinks that are alternatives to the classic Coca Cola.'³⁷

Hence, far from being independent, *FEMSA-Panamco is integral to Coke's expansion into Latin American markets: an expansion*

that nonetheless only makes commercial sense so long as it is profitable for the parent company, and to do this it must impose the disciplines of capitalism. The Coca-Cola FEMSA Panamco takeover was completed in June 2003. On 11th September, Panamco Colombia announced it would 'stop production at 11 of its 17 plants to boost efficiency.'³⁸ Coke's drive to concentrate production in just five or six mega-plants and so reduce its workforce generated new infringements of workers' rights. On 9th March 2004 managers in Cúcuta, Valledupar and Cartagena locked workers inside the plants pressuring them to relinquish their contracts. Thirty SINALTRAINAL members went on hunger strike to protect jobs, after 12 days they managed to secure an agreement.³⁹

THE CONTRA-BOYCOTT CAMPAIGN

There has not only been a campaign against Coke's abuses, there has been a contra-boycott campaign designed to stigmatise and undermine the corporation's critics.

The contra campaign employs two arguments. The first is to suggest that there are other more responsible trade unionists than SINALTRAINAL, which in any case is but one of many trade unions represented in Coca-Cola plants. Coca-Cola often quotes another union, SINALTRAINBEC, which it says states that 'we have not a single indication' that the bottling companies are linked to illegal armed groups.⁴⁰

This responsible-versus-irresponsible argument has been taken up by the TUC and leading British trade unionists, who argue that 'two of the three unions representing Coca-Cola workers in Colombia are opposed to the call for a boycott of Coca-Cola. We led from the front during the boycott of *apartheid* South Africa but cannot support a boycott that most of the workers affected do not themselves support.'⁴¹ Quite apart from the small matter of it being the oppressed black majority who actually led from the front to get rid of *apartheid*, with respect to Colombia the TUC's claim is incorrect on two counts: there are fourteen unions representing workers in the Coca-Cola system, not three; more importantly, although only a minority of the workers are in unions (for reasons explained above) SINALTRAINAL *represents the absolute majority of unionised workers* (417 out of 810 in late 2002; 389 of 550 in late 2004).⁴²

The TUC has been acting on the advice of the International Union of Foodworkers (IUF) that rejects the call for a boycott.⁴³ The IUF promotes its own affiliate, it is called SICO and has

at most just forty members (SINALTRAINBEC has less than ten). To appreciate the origins of SICO, refer to the report of a Canadian trade union delegation that visited the Urabá region in October 1997, long before the Coca-Cola boycott became an international issue, but just after the a bloody military/paramilitary offensive against the left in the region. The Canadians made a point of reporting their concern about a union representing banana workers called SINTRAINAGRO whose leadership were exceptional in not raising the issue of their members' security, as had all other trade unionists they met on the visit. Instead SINTRAINAGRO gave an account that 'coincided exactly' with the briefing by army commanding officer General Rito Alejo de Rio, notorious for his links with the paramilitaries. The general in turn praised SINTRAINAGRO as a 'model' union. Able to work with such endorsement, in 1999 SINTRAINAGRO helped form a new union branch in the same Carepa plant where Isidro Gil had been assassinated and SINALTRAINAL had been eliminated at the point of the gun three years previously. The new union was called SICO, which signed a collective agreement with management in February 2000. SICO's president is a member of the IUF's Latin America committee, and thanks the IUF and SINTRAINAGRO for their continuing support.⁴⁴

There are issues with drawing too close an analogy, but taking the TUC's example of South Africa, a favourite tactic of the *apartheid* regime was to put up hired stooges to poison the boycott call. And so it is here, by privileging an organisation with less than a tenth of SINALTRAINAL's representation, the IUF's approach has been deeply unfair to the majority of trade unionists in Coke plants in Colombia. Worse, the IUF has played into the hands of the corporation's divide and rule strategy. After this experience it is unsurprising that SINALTRAINAL does not accept the IUF as an interlocutor on its members' behalf. One of

the few surviving Colombian private sector unions, all of whom face political genocide, SINALTRAINAL's treatment by the official structures of international trade unionism is sectarian and shameful, and should be corrected by the movement as a whole.⁴⁵

Even more sinister has been Coca-Cola Corporation's second argument, the suggestion that SINALTRAINAL members are connected with economic sabotage and terrorism. The manager of the Bucaramanga plant publicly accused workers of being 'auxiliaries of the insurgency', a claim that was effectively buried when the court case against three local leaders was lost, but resurfaced again spectacularly at a Leeds University student debate in November 2004, where Coke's presentation gave the corporate version of why the allegations against it were being raised. Coke tried to link SINALTRAINAL with the FARC and the ELN, Colombia's two biggest guerrilla groups. One slide is of a newspaper report headlining that the FARC prohibited Coke sales, because the company refused to make payments, but there is no mention of the union anywhere in the text. Another slide is headed 'Violence and Security', and lists 'Some known attacks from the past 10 years...', starting with '1994: Bomb destroys Barrancabermeja Plant (ELN)', alongside is the image of an ELN publication declaring growing solidarity with Coca-Cola workers. If this publication is genuine then a significant detail has been changed, in the small print is the date of publication - November 1984 - the explosion took place ten years before that mis-stated by Coke and therefore unrelated to the current conflict with SINALTRAINAL (in fact the ELN said it was an act of solidarity with Guatemalan Coke workers).

When challenged in the debate by the Colombia Solidarity Campaign pointing out that this labeling is normally a prelude to assassination, the Coca-Cola representative denied any such

intent. But crude counter attack clearly is the corporation's intention: the same presentation quotes from SINALTRAINAL's website that the union is against Plan Colombia and US military intervention, and union President Javier Correa calling for an international campaign against corporate violence, as though both self-evidently demonstrate subversion.⁴⁶ Mark Thomas highlights similar scare tactics in India, where Coke puts out 'that the protests in Plachimada have been the work of Marxist agitators.'⁴⁷ A throwback to the 1950s Cold War mentality, this is the Bush doctrine in dangerous practice.

The corporation has set up a dedicated website - by coincidence also called 'Coke Facts' - in response to allegations against it.⁴⁸ Coca-Cola claims that it provides security for its employees, and cites a number of specific measures. The context of corporate policy tells a different story, sacking 15 per cent of the workforce in two years whilst meantime stigmatising their main trade union is not conducive to security. But like independence, Coke's notion of 'security' is well outside normal use. As for specific safety measures, President of Barrancabermeja branch William Mendoza points out that 65 SINALTRAINAL members are threatened with death, and that any protection has come about through the union's insistent campaigning with the support of the CUT Human Rights Department.⁴⁹ Despite these measures death threats, bomb scares, beatings, assassination attempts and actual assassinations of close relatives have all continued. The more fundamental problem is the impunity that protects the perpetrators of the violence.

Coca-Cola executives make several related points concerning violence: the state is too weak, the violence is prevalent, trade unionists are not the only victims, many other trade unionists as well as Coke workers are assassinated, managers as well as workers have

been killed – executives even complain that SINALTRAINAL does not say anything about them; ‘because they are not unionised they do not count as human beings.’⁵⁰ The overall picture is one of confusion, the corporation has done all in its power amidst senseless and overwhelming violence in which all sides suffer. This is evasion of the corporation’s own responsibility, *Coca-Cola must address the specific purpose and connections between its managers and the paramilitary hit squads.*

Coke claims that court rulings in the US and Colombia have absolved it. There is a duality in the corporation’s stance on the US civil action. In an interview with this author Coke’s representative took a defensive posture: he said the corporation would not answer any specific allegations while the Florida court case is in motion.⁵¹ So, is Coca-Cola in the US court case, or not? With ownership of 46 per cent of FEMSA stock it still very much is. This reflects a deeper contradiction in Coke’s positioning, are operations in the bottling plants its responsibility, or not? Well, ‘yes’ when it comes to the claim that employment is being provided, but ‘no’ when it comes to caring for the lives of those same employees. As far as justice in Colombia’s courts go, the workers’ right to life was treated with the utmost arrogant cynicism in the judgment denying protection for the surviving targeted Carepa trade unionists - posted on Coke’s own web site.⁵²

Coca-Cola and its bottlers continue using Colombian state institutions to persecute SINALTRAINAL. In 2003 Panamco raised charges of ‘injury and calumny’ against seven named leaders in retaliation for their participation in a press conference launching the US civil action. In Colombia these are treated as criminal offences. Perhaps it is fitting that Panamco’s lawyer Dr. Jaime Bernal Cuellar was himself the state’s National Prosecutor in the mid-1990s, in which position he signally failed to pursue any of

those responsible for the assassinations. Coke’s bottlers raised at least seven libel cases against individual SINALTRAINAL leaders, and the corporation has raised injunctions seeking to remove union leaders from their posts in Giradot, Bogotá and Villavicencio. The next move was an attempt to criminalise the union as an organisation. On 8th July 2004, Coca-Cola presented a petition to the Ministry of Social Protection (an Orwellian name if ever there was one) to revoke SINALTRAINAL’s statutes, attacking articles 2 and 7 that make it possible for shopkeepers, informal workers and other people in the agro-industry to join the union. This petition was accepted and agreed on 10th August 2004. SINALTRAINAL appealed to the courts, and on 24th February 2005 a magistrate ruled that the Ministry decision was in contravention of international labour treaties recognising labour rights and human rights, and upholding SINALTRAINAL’s statutes as legal. But at time of writing the Ministry officials have not accepted the court’s ruling. As the union points out, the outcome is crucial for it to be able to legally organise the 92 per cent of Coke’s manual workers who are outside the collective agreement and employment law because they are subcontracted, independent or temporary workers.⁵³ Such battles for the most oppressed ‘informal’ sectors to organise against the super-exploitation of the multinationals are fundamental for the future.

A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE - THE REAL THING

In conclusion we need to consider what it means to be up against a global profit-making machine.

Firstly, the significance of overseas markets for Coca-Cola is immense. Milton Boki estimates that 'Coca Cola obtains 75 per cent of its profits outside the US, a considerable proportion of this comes from Latin America'.⁵⁴ The corporation divides the world into four, according to how deeply it has penetrated the consumer market. The 'leading edge' markets are those countries (Mexico, Spain, US and Australia) where the average per capita consumption of Coke products is over 250 'servings' a year; which in 2002 accounted for 47 per cent of the company's sales by volume. Then there are the 'developed markets' annual per capita consumption 150-249 servings (includes the UK), the 'developing markets' 50-149 servings and finally the 'emerging markets' with less than 50 servings per person per year which account for only 11 per cent of company unit sales, and 69 per cent of the world's population. The corporation has a differentiated approach to consumers, aiming to be 'more sophisticated' in developed and leading edge markets where 'we must activate points of purchase so that consumers have greater connections with our brands'.⁵⁵

Secondly, Coca-Cola is not only about the profile of the advertising but the ubiquity of the product, it really is everywhere. But more and more people in the so-called developed markets want to end this saturation exposure, especially parents concerned for the health of their children who object to the ready availability of Coke and other like junk food products, from September 2005 vending machines will not be allowed in French schools.⁵⁶ Coke's near global presence also means that anyone who wants to can join in the campaign, wherever they are. The cases highlighted

here are not the only struggles against Coca-Cola by any means, rather they are the tip of the iceberg. Coca-Cola FEMSA Venezuela's top managers decided to dismiss fifty workers because they could not show evidence of having signed the petition against President Hugo Chavez; workers at Coca-Cola factories in Peru were on strike on 31st May and 1st June 2004 because managers threatened to sack 233 of them, including union leaders; that same month Human Rights Watch issued a report that the sugar used in Coke products in El Salvador is 'in part the product of child labor'; the civilian resistance to the US/UK occupation of Iraq boycotts Coca-Cola; the residents of the Malvern Hills who are trying to protect their flora and fauna from being bled dry by Coke over extracted mineral water, and so on.⁵⁷ As Andy Rowell comments, 'Coca-Cola could become the first global company to face a sustained global boycott.'⁵⁸

Thirdly, there is diversity as well as potential unity in these struggles. There has to be acceptance of this diversity, with space created for a democratic hearing of the experiences of groups such as SINALTRAINAL, for in the fight for justice the victims' needs have to be paramount. At the same time, and whilst recognising that the sharp end is usually in the global South, there are many workers, communities and consumers in the North in dispute with the corporation on legitimate grounds in their own right, they can make common cause on issues that connect peoples around the world.

Finally, the problems such as Coke's operations in Colombia and India cannot be resolved by PR, for the sake of human life they have to be addressed in substance. But, as Mark Thomas concluded from his visit to Kerala 'it is fairly safe to say that Coke have an image problem that the advertisers might not be able to solve'.⁵⁹ Coca-Cola is an unreconstructed profiteer still in corporate

denial, it has yet to come to terms with the fact that you cannot sell human rights, nor can you buy them, quite simply you have to respect them. It might well be that we have to get rid of Coca-Cola to save water, and to save life. Returning to that Wall Street speech by Neville Isdell, Coke's CEO promised that his manifesto 'is a call to action', although 'not a radical change in strategy but in execution'⁶⁰- quite a conservative call then.

We call for an international peoples coalition of workers, communities and consumers to hold Coca-Cola accountable for its crimes, and to achieve justice for all its victims worldwide.

Now that *would* be a manifesto worth fighting for.

NOTES

¹ Dedicated to fellow internationalist delegates on the International Caravan for Life that visited Colombia in June 2004, but most especially to Emilio Rodriguez (whose warm heart has returned the gold a thousandfold) and to the ever militant and fraternal Dave Younger, both of whom carried the load when it mattered. Thanks also to them, and to Amit Srivastava, Gearoid O'Loingsigh, Dan Kovalik, Ray Rogers and SINALTRAINAL leaders for answering my questions and for their comments on an earlier draft. We all draw inspiration from the members of SINALTRAINAL, whose daily courage and calmness under fire is immensely impressive. They, like so many in Colombia, are truly living on the frontline.

² *Adweek*, 11th November 2004 at <http://www.indiaresource.org/news/2004/1052.html>.

³ *The Guardian*, 28th June 2004

⁴ see Mark Curtis, *Unpeople: Britain's Secret Human Rights Abuses* (London: Vintage, 2004)

⁵ see ICCHRLA, *Trade Unionism Under Attack in Colombia: Report of the Canadian Trade Union Delegation to Colombia* (Toronto: Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America, 1998) at <http://www.colombiasupport.net/199802/canadaunion.html> ;

Daniel M Kovalik, Terry Collingsworth and Natacha Thys, *Complaint in the United States District Court - Southern District of Florida* (Pittsburgh/Washington: United Steelworkers of America/ International Labor Rights Fund, 2001) at <http://www.mindfully.org/Industry/Coca-Cola-Human-Rights20jul01.htm>

Hiram Monserrate, NYC fact-finding delegation's report on human rights violations by Coke — Final Report (New York: NYC Council Member, 2004) at <http://www.killercoke.org/pdf/monsfinal.pdf>

⁶ Kovalik et al, pp23 - 34

⁷ SINALTRAINAL Urgent Actions received 19th June 2002, 11th September 2003, 20th April 2004

⁸ *Cambio* 8th February 1999. A later interview to Dick Emanuelsson suggests that the negotiations were actually conducted by an official from the International Red Cross, with Panamco executives in close proximity – see <http://www.rebellion.org/plancolombia/cruzroja070402.htm>

⁹ SINALTRAINAL Letter, 24th December 2001; Don Kovalik correspondence, 10th March 2005

¹⁰ Steven Dudley ‘War in Colombia’s Oilfields’ *The Nation*, 5th August 2002

¹¹ SINALTRAINAL Urgent Action received 25th August 2004.

¹² Campaign to Stop Killer Coke *Coca-Cola Denies All Responsibility: ILRF, Colombian Unionists Respond*. Statement, 14th April 2003 at <http://killercoke.org/restocoke.htm>

¹³ SINALTRAINAL report received 17th November 2004

¹⁴ ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) *Foreign Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2002 Report*. LC/G.2198-P (Santiago, Chile: United Nations, 2003)

¹⁵ CILCT (*Comité Internacionalista de Lucha contra las Transnacionales*) *Una Delirante Ambición Imperial*. (Bogotá: CILCT, 2003)

¹⁶ Human Rights Watch *Colombia’s Killer Networks: The Military-paramilitary Partnership and the United States*. (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1996); *The Sixth Division: Military-paramilitary Ties and U.S. Policy in Colombia*. (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2001)

¹⁷ Amit Srivastava *Coca-Cola Spins Out of Control in India* at <http://www.indiaresource.org/campaigns/coke/2004/cockespins.html>

¹⁸ Amit Srivastava, op cit

¹⁹ with reports by Christian Aid *Behind the Mask: the real face of corporate responsibility*, Action Aid and the BBC.

²⁰ Reports at www.indiaresource.org

²¹ Press release, 25th November 2004 at <http://www.indiaresource.org/press/2004/mehdiganjattack.html>

²² Vandana Shiva ‘Food Rights, Free Trade and Fascism’ in Matthew J. Gibney (ed) *Globalizing Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Sistema Nacional Agroalimentario (SNAL) at <http://www.sinaltrainal.org/>

²³ Kovalik et al.

²⁴ Terry Collingsworth and Dan Kovalik *Court Rules That Human Rights Case Can Go Forward Against Coca-Cola Bottlers*. Statement, 1st April 2003

²⁵ see <http://www.sinaltrainal.org/boikot/noconsumo.html>

²⁶ SINALTRAINAL *World Wide Campaign Against Coca Cola – Statement 13th November 2003* (Paris: European Social Forum, 2003)

²⁷ Reports at <http://www.killercoke.org/news.htm> and see Jeremy Blasi, *Coca-Cola and Human Rights in Colombia*. (UC Berkeley: Center for Labor Research and Education, November 2003)

²⁸ Quoted by Ross Getman, see <http://www.schoolpouringrights.com>

²⁹ See Indymedia Ireland for reports and discussion

³⁰ *The Independent on Sunday*, 23rd May 2004

³¹ Correspondence from Gearoid O’Loingsigh and Cian O’Callaghan

³² ReboC–Rete Boicottaggio Coca Cola at <http://www.nococacola.info>; *La Republica*, 10th March 2005

³³ see ‘Killer Cola in Colombia’ *Colombia Solidarity bulletin No 14*, October 2004

³⁴ Coca-Cola statement in Leeds University students’ debate, 16th November 2004

³⁵ Kovalik et al, op cit p12. See also Miguel Angel Reyes and Mike Gatehouse *Soft Drink – Hard Labour: Guatemalan Workers Take on Coca-Cola*. (London: Latin America Bureau, 1987)

³⁶ *South Florida Business Journal* 23rd December 2002; *Killer Coke Killer Coke vs. The Truth: A Response to Denials and Distortions* undated at <http://killercoke.org/cokeresponsefinal.htm>; Richard Girard *Coca-Cola Company: Inside the Real Thing. Corporate Profile*. (Toronto: Polaris Institute, 2004)

³⁷ see <http://www.finanzas.com/id.4977386/noticias/noticia.htm>

³⁸ Reuters report in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 14th September 2003

³⁹ Jana Silverman 'Coca-Cola hunger strike ends in union win' in *Colombia Week*, 29th March 2004 <http://www.colombiaweek.org/20040329.html#labor>

⁴⁰ Interview, 23rd April 2004; http://www.cokefacts.org/labor_union_relations.shtml; correspondence from Martin Norris, Director of Communications, Coca-Cola Great Britain, 10th October 2003

⁴¹ Letter by Brendan Barber TUC et al. to *New Statesman*, 12th April 2004. The claim is even more distorted by Justice for Colombia, *Trade Union Delegation to Colombia November 2004*.

⁴² figures supplied by SINALTRAINAL: a) to the Popular Public Hearing Brussels, 10th October 2003; b) correspondence, 17th November 2004

⁴³ *IUF Urgent Action: E-Mail Circular*, 14th July 2003

⁴⁴ *SICO El SICO y Coca-Cola firman convenio colectivo en Carepa, Uraba*. Statement 22nd March 2002 at <http://www.rel-uita.org/companias/coca-cola/sico.htm>

⁴⁵ FENSUAGRO is another important agricultural union facing harsh persecution.

⁴⁶ Coca-Cola Corporation 'Why?', presentation Leeds University 16th November 2004

⁴⁷ Mark Thomas *New Statesman*, 29th March 2004

⁴⁸ Coke Facts at <http://www.cokefacts.org/index.shtml> The title appears to be in direct response to Mark Thomas.

⁴⁹ Campaign to Stop Killer Coke 'Coca-Cola Lies About Providing Security',

statement 14th May 2003 at <http://www.killercoke.org/pdf/seclie.pdf>

⁵⁰ Leeds debate, 16th November 2004

⁵¹ Interview, 23rd April 2004

⁵² Decision by Criminal Court 10, Bogotá, 22nd April 1997 at http://www.cokefacts.org/pdfs/Court_docs_from_Colombia.pdf

⁵³ SINALTRAINAL communiqués, 6th August 2003; 17th November 2004; 9th March 2005

⁵⁴ see <http://www.finanzas.com/id.4977386/noticias/noticia.htm>

⁵⁵ Coca-Cola Corporation, 2002 Annual Report. (Atlanta: Coca-Cola, 2003), p45. In 2004 Coca-Cola had a net income of US \$ 4,847 million out of net operating revenues of US \$21,962 million

⁵⁶ Ross Getman 'Living Well Off The Fat Of The Land', 15th January 2005 at <http://spinwatch.server101.com/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.handsoffvenezuela.org>; http://www.rel-uita.org/sindicatos/sinatrel_28-5-04.htm; *Human Rights Watch Turning A Blind Eye: Hazardous Child Labor in El Salvador's Sugarcane Cultivation* (New York: HRW, 2004); Haifa Zangana speech to War on Want conference 'Making a Killing: Corporations, Conflict and Poverty' London, 12th March 2005; Nick Britten 'Coca-Cola plans "will bleed hills dry"' *Daily Telegraph*, 23rd November 2004

⁵⁸ Andy Rowell 'Did you have a Coke free Christmas?', 3rd January 2005 at <http://spinwatch.server101.com/>

⁵⁹ 'Wells went dry and crops failed' Mark Thomas at <http://www.actionaid.org.uk/433/article.html>

⁶⁰ *Adweek op cit*

MORE INFORMATION - WHAT YOU CAN DO

Boycott Coca-Cola products (the full list is available at <http://www.colombiasolidarity.org.uk/cocacolacampaign.html>)

Propose that your union, student association etc joins the boycott and invites a speaker from our Campaign.

Campaign to get Coke products out of your workplace or social centre. Leaflets, stickers, petitions and posters available from the address below.

Write a letter to Coca-Cola explaining why you have taken this action, and asking that the corporation begins to negotiate directly with SINALTRAINAL to a) recognise the harm its policies have done b) compensate the victims and c) assist in bringing the managers responsible for collusion with paramilitaries to justice. Send to:

Managing Director, Coca-Cola Great Britain and Ireland, 1 Queen Caroline Street, Hammersmith, London W6 9HQ

Join the Colombia Solidarity Campaign:
£7.50/£15 unwaged/waged individuals;
£30/£60/£120 small/ medium/ large organisations

We aim to open an office and launch a new bulletin in the coming year. To do this we need your donations

Name.....Contact.....

Address.....

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Send with cheque payable to 'Colombia Solidarity Campaign', returning to: Colombia Solidarity Campaign, PO Box 8446, London N17 6NZ.
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AND AGAINST
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