

# THE 2014 INTERNATIONAL WHITE DOVE AWARD TO RAY ROGERS

*The Rochester Committee on Latin America is proud to honor legendary union activist Ray Rogers, Director of the Killer Coke Campaign with the International White Dove Award at ROCLA's annual Rice & Beans Dinner on Friday, March 14th, 2014. [Ed. Note]*

Ray Rogers is an American labor rights activist, strategist, organizer and head of Corporate Campaign, Inc. He is credited with pioneering the strategy of the corporate campaign, a tactic that has been used with success by labor unions, human rights advocates and environmental groups in their battles against corporations in the United States and all over the world.

Rogers explains that the corporate campaign begins with an analysis of a targeted company's corporate, financial and political ties. This information is then used to design specific strategies and tactics to put relentless economic and political pressure on the primary target and its most important allies, with the ultimate goal of forcing the targeted company or political institution to change its behavior and act responsibly. Usually that requires the target to recognize the rights of its workers and their union, or to stop polluting and clean up contaminated land, and, where appropriate, to make restitution to the victims, their families, and their communities.

During his decades of activism, Rogers has battled on behalf of labor union members against giant corporations and political institutions such as J.P. Stevens & Co., Hormel, International Paper, American Airlines, Campbell Soup, Consolidated Edison, TIAA-CREF, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, State of New York and, most recently, The Coca-Cola Company. Time Magazine noted that Ray has succeeded in bringing some of



America's most powerful corporations to their knees.

Since 2003, Rogers has directed the Campaign to Stop Killer Coke, which he founded because of Coca-Cola's complicity in numerous acts of violence in Colombia and Guatemala. These include the kidnapping, torture and murder of union leaders and members of their families. Lawsuits in Colombia charge that Coca-Cola bottlers "have contracted with or otherwise directed security paramilitary forces that utilized extreme violence and murdered, tortured, unlawfully detained or otherwise silenced trade union leaders."

In 2010, another human rights abuse lawsuit filed in a U.S. federal district court charged that in Guatemala, Coca-Cola has conducted "a campaign of violence—including rape, murder and attempted murder—against trade unionists and their families at the behest of the management of Co-

ca-Cola bottling and processing plants." In El Salvador, Coca-Cola benefits from child labor and its operations have polluted major water sources. Coca-Cola in Mexico is alleged to have cheated workers and the government out of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Thanks to the Campaign to Stop Killer Coke, some 70 schools in the United States and around the world have kicked Coca-Cola off their campuses. These include City University of New York, the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Rutgers University, DePaul University, the University of California Berkeley, Smith and Bard Colleges and the University of Saskatchewan. More than 45 labor unions have announced their support of the Campaign to Stop Killer Coke. Most recently, the Executive Board of the Rochester Labor Council endorsed the Stop Killer Coke campaign, unanimously adopting a resolution calling on affiliates to remove all Coca-Cola products from their facilities and to ban purchases of Coca-Cola products in the future. ■

