



# STOP KILLER COKE

## Defend the Colombian Hunger Strikers

Today in Colombia, there are a number of factory workers gathered out the front of a Coca Cola bottling plant over two weeks into their hunger strike.

These workers gather knowing that what they are defending is the right to a union, the right to a workplace without violence, and the right to justice against a company that is responsible for the murder of their co-workers and forced union resignations at gunpoint.

Throughout this strike, the workers and their union SINAL TRAINAL have suffered threats, abuse and intimidation, but the strikers remain united.

In 1996, union representative Insidro Segundo Gil was gunned down on the factory floor by paramilitaries claiming their aim was to protect corporate interests.

Following Insidros death, paramilitaries handed union resignation letters to the shocked factory workers, where a massive union exodus took place.

Since then trade unionists and their families have been kidnapped, tortured, intimidated and harassed by those responsible in Insidros murder, while many others fled, losing their only source of income.

The monthly wage dropped from the already meagre \$380 per month to a pathetic \$130, and there are reports of further decline of working conditions at these factories.

SINAL TRAINAL, the union which represents the bottling factories workers, and the family of Insidro Gil, plus other Colombian

trade unionists immediately brought legal action against the Coca Cola company (US).

The outcome dismissed the Coca Cola Company of America, on grounds that the firm does not have control over the labour practices of its bottlers - but then allowed the case against the bottlers to proceed. If the Coca Cola Company continues to allow these bottlers to operate in this fashion, then they are not only advocating the use of union smashing measures, but they are also relying on them.

Coke supplies the bottlers with the syrup they need to create the drink.

While Coke continues to have associations with these bottlers, they continue to be a part of the problem, a problem which they can add to the list of human rights breaches across the world carried out in their name.

Here in Australia, we find that under the Howard government our unions are under attack,. We defend our rights to organise to protect ourselves from the corporations and governments who exploit them.

Why should Colombian workers be any different? It is imperative that we answer the Colombian workers' call for solidarity, and stand up in defence not only of basic human rights, but the right to work without fear.

SINALTRAINAL Vice President Juan Carlos Galvis sums it up best with this statement: "If we lose the fight against Coca-Cola, we will first lose our union, next our jobs and then our lives."

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# “This product is defective.”

## ☠️ **Coke Stinks!**

With a massive 90% slice of the world's soft drink markets, Coca Cola not only treats its workers with disdain, but also its customers. In many countries, Coke has been found using sub standard water in its products, including the use of cemetery run-off in parts of Colombia! If you think the product's a bit

dodgy, then wait until you hear how Coke treats its workers...

## ☠️ **Coca Cola Murders**

Colombia is not a safe place to be a trade unionist. It's even more dangerous if you work for one of the Coca Cola bottlers. Since 1996 when union negotiator Isidro Gil was gunned down inside the factory he worked at, there has been a campaign to intimidate, kidnap, torture and murder trade unionists

## ☠️ **Paramilitaries**

Right wing paramilitary gangs in Colombia are responsible for the murders. They say their main aim is to protect corporate interests.

## ☠️ **US Training**

The paramilitary gangs can be linked directly to the USA's School of the Americas. Directly managed by the US government, it has been training paramilitaries since 1988 to terrorise unionists and other left-wingers. The School of the Americas handbook is clear. Trade unionists are a threat to big business and must be eliminated.

# COLOMBIA TODAY

**27th March, 7.00pm**

**New Council Chamber,  
Trades Hall,  
Cnr Victoria & Lygon Sts,**

Colombian human rights defender, Nilson Davila speaks about “Colombia Today”. Find out more about the state of Colombia today, the plight of the Coca-Cola bottling plant workers, and what we can do to help.