

## **Coca-Cola Union Leader's Son Kidnapped As Attacks on SINALTRAINAL Escalate**

*(The following is an English translation of a message the Campaign to Stop Killer Coke received on Sept. 11, 2003, from SINALTRAINAL, the union representing workers at Coca-Cola bottling plants in Colombia.)*

Today (Sept. 10, 2003), at about 1 p.m. in a spot known as Simon Bolivar Blvd., (La Tienda la Esmeralda) in Barranquilla, Columbia, four unknown masked subjects pulled 15-year-old David Jose Carranza Calle — son of Limberto Carranza, a Coca-Cola worker in the city of Barranquilla who is the national director of SINALTRAINAL — from his bike and forced him into a white truck. They took him away and tortured him, asking the whereabouts of his father. At about 4:30 p.m., they dropped him off at a spot known as Canyon of the Ahuyama, where he was picked up by a man passing by and brought to the police.

Meanwhile, at the house of Limberto Carranza, they received a phone call saying: “Unionist son of a bitch; we are going to break you. And if you won’t break, we will attack your home.”

This act is added to the list of incidents against Coca-Cola workers and their families, including assassinations, threats, displacements, disappearances and attacks — the most recent of which occurred on Aug. 22 against Juan Carlos Galvis, vice president of SINALTRAINAL in Barrancabermeja, as well as the intimidation, pressure and threats we keep receiving in various areas. They are reactivating the criminal offensive against the workers at a time when we are resisting the pressure campaign launched by Coca-Cola FEMSA, SA, which includes locking workers in hotels and factories and pressuring them to renounce their work contracts in exchange for economic compensation, as they had done in 2000 and 2001.

They are using threats of firing and psychological terrorism, as they did Sept. 10 with workers Pedro Andrade and Sergio Silva in the city of Cucuta, and threatening to convert bottling facilities in Moneria, Cartagena, Valledupar, Cucuta Barrancabermeja and other areas into distribution centers.

These methods are all part of Coca-Cola FEMSA, SA's strategy to reduce costs, subcontract manual labor, eliminate labor organizing and collectivize labor in order to concentrate their production in the fewest bottling facilities, creating “megaplants” with fewer workers and supplying the market through distribution centers. We have observed for many years that the company was preparing to deliver this blow to the workers and they are taking advantage of the favoritism that the government of Alvaro Uribe Velez has been giving, through globalization and the benefits the ALCA [hemispheric “free trade agreement”] will bring...

In spite of all this aggression, SINALTRAINAL and the workers continue to resist. The labor conflict persists — and so will our mobilization until Coca-Cola makes a serious effort to resolve it and to compensate the victims.