

United Hebrew Trades Endorses Campaign

The United Hebrew Trades Division of the Jewish Labor Committee, a 115-year-old activist organization, expresses its support for the Campaign to Stop Killer Coke in the following article from its quarterly publication, *Labor in the News*:



Stop Killer Coke Campaign

YOUR HELP is needed to stop a gruesome cycle of murders, kidnappings and torture of union leaders and organizers at Coca-Cola bottling plants in Colombia.

In July 2001, the United Steelworkers of America and the International Labor Rights Fund filed a lawsuit on behalf of the Colombian trade unionists. The lawsuit and campaign aim to force Coca-Cola to prevent further bloodshed and to provide safe working conditions.

Coca-Cola bottlers “contracted with or otherwise directed paramilitary security forces that utilize extreme violence and murdered, tortured, unlawfully detained or otherwise silenced trade union leaders,” the lawsuit states.

In 2001 the Coca-Cola Co. made \$4 billion in profits. Coca-Cola continues to rake in billions, yet the frightening conditions at the plants remain unchanged. Labor unions and human rights advocates in the U.S. can stop these atrocities at Coca-Cola’s bottling plants...

Below are excerpts from the minutes of UHT’s membership meeting on Sept. 16:

“Our speaker this evening, Ray Rogers, is the Director of Corporate Campaign, Inc. He described the campaign against Killer Coke, which refers to the Coca-Cola Bottling Company’s human rights violations. For example, eight leaders of the union that represents workers in the Coca-Cola bottling plants in Colombia were “assassinated by paramilitary thugs who often work in close collaboration with management.” Many more union members have been kidnapped, tortured, threatened, and/or illegally detained.”

“Ray showed posters and passed out leaflets that described the terrible treatment of the workers at the bottling plants. The flyer entitled “Killer Coke” lists the Board of Directors and many are from well-known companies such as J.P. Morgan and Hearst Magazines...”

“**United Hebrew Trades** joins in supporting this Campaign to Stop Killer Coke, and urges all members and affiliates to choose beverages not bottled by Coca-Cola. One of the leaflets Ray handed out contains a sample letter, which may be signed and sent to the Board of Directors. Or it may be revised by each individual and put on their own letterhead. This is an ongoing campaign which will need a lot of support.”

(In November, the UHT mailed the “Colombian Coke Float” petition to all its members.)