

## United Fruit Company

Pablo Neruda, Chilean writer and politician: “*La United Fruit Co.*” from *Canto General* (1950)

When the trumpet sounded everything was prepared on earth, and Jehovah gave the world to Coca-Cola Inc., Anaconda, Ford Motors, and other corporations. The United Fruit Company reserved for itself the most juicy piece, the central coast of my world, the delicate waist of America.

It re-baptized these countries Banana Republics, and over the sleeping dead, over the unquiet heroes who won greatness, liberty, and banners, it established an opera buffa: it abolished free will, gave out imperial crowns, encouraged envy, attracted the dictatorship of flies: Trujillo flies, Tachos flies, Carias flies, Martinez flies, Ubico flies, flies sticky with submissive blood and marmalade, drunken flies that buzz over the tombs of the people, circus flies, wise flies expert at tyranny.

With the bloodthirsty flies came the Fruit Company, amassed coffee and fruit in ships which put to sea like overloaded trays with the treasures from our sunken lands.

Meanwhile the Indians fall into the sugared depths of the harbors and are buried in the morning mists; a corpse rolls, a thing without name, a discarded number, a bunch of rotten fruit thrown on the garbage heap.

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