

Remembering Rachel Corrie

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In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

Rachel represented the best of courageous activism. She put her body on the line for justice. She did so because it matters. She's gone but not forgotten.

Ten years ago on March 16, an Israeli bulldozer driver murdered her in cold blood. She tried stopping a Rafah refugee camp home demolition.

Eye witnesses said she climbed atop a giant Caterpillar tractor. They're designed to destroy homes. They're weapons of mass destruction. Caterpillar's complicit in Israeli crimes.

Rachel spoke to the driver. She climbed down. She knelt 10 - 20 meters in front. She blocked its path with her body. She was in clear view.

The tractor lurched forward. Activists screamed for it to stop. The soldier-operator pressed on. He crushed Rachel to death.

He ran over her twice. He remains unaccountable. Rachel's family wants justice. So should everyone.

The [Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace & Justice](#) (RCFPJ) supports it. Its mission and guiding principles state:

The Foundation continues what Rachel began. It reflects "her vision, spirit, and creative energy...."

"It supports "build(ing) understanding, respect, and appreciation for differences, and that promote cooperation within and between local and global communities."

"The foundation encourages and supports grassroots efforts in pursuit of human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice, which we view as pre-requisites for world peace."

Its guiding principles include:

- challenging injustice and resisting oppression;
- teaching justice and peacemaking skills;
- advancing "human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice for all....;"
- seeking creative ways to achieve these goals; and

- committing to people and places the way Rachel did, especially those most disadvantaged and repressed.

Rachel was 23 when murdered. She believed in nonviolent direct action. She supported oppressed Palestinians. It became her life's struggle. She gave it doing what's right. What greater sacrifice than that!

In her own words, she said:

"I'm here for other children.

I'm here because I care.

I'm here because children everywhere are suffering and because forty thousand people die each day from hunger.

I'm here because those people are mostly children.

We have got to understand that they dream our dreams and we dream theirs.

We have got to understand that they are us. We are them.

My dream is to stop hunger by the year 2000.

My dream is to give the poor a chance.

My dream is to save the 40,000 people who die each day.

My dream can and will come true if we all look into the future and see the light that shines there.

If we ignore hunger, that light will go out.

If we all help and work together, it will grow and burn free with the potential of tomorrow."

Her dedication and humility came out in comments like "I can't be Picasso. I can't be Jesus. I can't save the planet single-handedly. I can wash dishes."

Cindy and Craig are Rachel's parents. Their struggle for justice continues. It's long denied.

On March 16, they thanked people everywhere for support. Worldwide observances remembered Rachel. Activists did across America.

They did so in Argentina, Canada, France, Italy, Malaysia, Scotland, Turkey, Occupied Palestine and elsewhere.

Rachel was an International Solidarity Movement (ISM) volunteer. On March 16, ISM remembered her courage. It [quoted her saying](#):

"I feel like I'm witnessing the systematic destruction of a people's ability to survive. It's horrifying."

“Sometimes I sit down to dinner with people and I realize there is a massive military machine surrounding us, trying to kill the people I’m having dinner with.”

She’s remembered with love. New generations won’t forget her. She symbolizes what’s right. She inspires others to continue her struggle.

[Mondoweiss](#) contributor Phan Nguyen remembered her. On March 16, 2003, he was home when he heard what happened. “Rachel’s dead,” he was told.

She traveled to Rafah. She did so to make a difference. She got ISM training. She was prepared for the unexpected. She died two months after arriving. An official Israeli statement called it an “accident.”

An Israeli court said:

“It is clear the death of Ms Corrie was not caused as a result of a direct action by the bulldozer or by its running her over.”

“(She) was not run over by an engineering vehicle but rather was struck by a hard object, most probably a slab of concrete which was moved or slid down while the mound of earth which she was standing behind was moved.”

Eye witnesses said otherwise. It was cold-blooded murder. Rachel was a committed activist. She was an anti-war movement organizer. Israel and the mainstream media blamed her for her death. They did so cynically and maliciously.

She provided material support to terrorists, they claimed.

She put herself in harm’s way. She did so because it mattered.

On the 10th anniversary of her death, Rachel’s parents called for a “thorough, credible, transparent investigation.”

They want America’s military, political and economic support ended. They want truth and justice for “all civilians killed or maimed by US-funded weapons.”

Israeli ruthlessness is policy. Occupation harshness reflects it. Obama supports Israel’s worst crimes. So do nearly all congressional members.

Nothing ahead suggests change. Righteous struggle continues. It does so unabated. Rachel gave her life trying. Likeminded activists risks theirs. Liberating Palestine matters.

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