----- Original Message ----- 
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To: "Coalition of Women for a Just Peace" <CWJP@yahoogroups.com> 
Cc: "Alef list" <alef@list.haifa.ac.il>; "Discussion CWJP" <CWJP-discussion@yahoogroups.com> 
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2003 3:01 PM 
Subject: Some Lives Are Cheaper than Others

> Friends, 
> Last night in Israel, an evening in memory of Rachel Corrie was held. 
> Rachel was the 23-year old member of the International Solidarity Movement > (ISM) who was killed by a bulldozer as she stood her ground, tryir to > protect a Palestinian home from being destroyed (see www.palsolidarity.org > for details). 
> We were about 200 who gathered in Tel Aviv for the event, organize > jointly by the Israel Committee Against House Demolitions and the > Coalition of Women for Peace. Most of us were Israelis, as the closure > still keeps out most Palestinians from the territories. One who did come > (sorry I missed his name) spoke on behalf of the joint effort at Mas'ha to > halt the destructive "separation wall" now in construction on Palestinian > lands. There was also a handful of activists from ISM and CPT
(Christian Peacemakers Team), though these internationals now rarely cross into Israel, as the authorities would prevent them from returning to their work in the territories.

Although the evening highlighted the special qualities of Rachel - an incredible young woman who will continue to inspire us all (see her parents' letter below) - many speakers talked about the brutalization of the Israeli army and Israeli society in general, which no longer cares about the death and destruction wreaked daily in our name. As a result, the army is no longer held accountable for the shooting of any non-settlers or soldiers in the territories. Since Rachel was killed, two more ISM members were seriously injured -- Brian had his face blown away and Tom lies brain-dead. Shockingly, the army conducted no investigation into any of these shootings, even though demands were made on every public, private, and diplomatic level.

Just a few days and several kilometers away from where Rachel was killed, Nuha al-Mukadame also lost her life -- a 33 year-old Palestinian woman who was crushed when the Israeli army destroyed her home in the middle of the night. Nuha was killed, her husband and 10 children injured, but the army curtly defended its action -- they were targeting the house next door -- and never looked back. Thus it goes for the 2,006 Palestinians killed by Israelis in this Intifada (www.btselem.org) -- some deliberate assassinations, some 'armed terrorists', and some just in the house next door.

Israeli soldiers do what they like in the territories, with no fear of prosecution. The recent efforts to keep out witnesses -- journalists, human rights workers, humanitarian organizations, and peace activists -- are not surprising, considering the desire to hide the evidence. And I tremble to think what happens when these soldiers return home, well-versed in techniques of bullying and humiliating. This is not good for anybody.

Gila Svirsky
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