

A Few Words from the Editor

The prophetic voice never comes from an expected source.

I first met Rachel Corrie on Red Square, in front of the Community Activities Building at The Evergreen State College. She was handing out bold printed flyers decrying cuts to the Labor Center's budget.

A red corduroy jacket hung from her slight frame, and a lock of blonde hair fell to the side of her face from under a wool cap, cocked slightly to the side.

Ugh... more political literature, I thought to myself. Evergreen is a hot-spot for student activism, and one can barely make it from class to lunch without being propagandized. Rachel took a couple minutes to educate me about the issue, and asked if I wanted to help. "Sure", I said, "Put me on your email list."

A few months later Rachel came to my home to meet with Will Hewitt and a couple other friends. They sat in the basement watching BBC videos on Palestine, studying Arabic, and making plans for a trip to the Gaza Strip.

I knew little about Palestine, but after watching a couple videos with them I began to realize the risk they were taking. I made them promise to stay safe, and when I started doubting I made them reiterate their promise. Rachel smiled gently at me and tried to comfort me with the information



that hundreds of international activists had made the trip and that none had been killed.

Since Rachel's death, she has been alternately accused of naivety and stupidity, as well as of being a malicious supporter of terrorists. Yet the reader will find in both Will Hewitt's account of her work as well as in Rachel's own writing, each found in this issue of the paper, that Rachel was someone much greater than her detractors wish to portray and even greater than her supporters can articulate.

On March 16th, 2003, while working to protect the home of a local pharmacist she had befriended, Rachel entered the ranks of martyrs for justice.

To the Palestinians, she was a hero from a foreign land and a bringer of hope for a nation occupied, oppressed, and cut off from the world. For those in our society who can recognize the Divine yearning for justice here on Earth, Rachel was a prophet whose voice traveled to us from the wilderness of a violent world.

This issue of the *Canaanite's Call* is dedicated to Rachel Corrie, the mental health worker, Evergreen student, union activist, prophet and martyr whose death and whose writing have made me cry far too many times. Rachel awoke in me the awareness of concrete suffering - real human suffering that is so much more pressing than an

abstract political issue. And Rachel's example lit the path to salvation for us all; redemption for the privileged comes by joining in solidarity with those who lack privilege... sometimes at a great cost.

This issue of the paper is also dedicated to Will, a good friend of seven years whose eccentric life, commitment to social justice, profound wisdom, deep compassion, and strange sense of humor have transformed my life. I owe my worldview and my life at Bread & Roses to Will.

May God bless and keep them both.

-Phil Owen