

COMMENTARY

Dry Bones



Letters to the Editor

The real 'bigots'

We are writing to further clarify the record on the Workplace Religious Freedom Act, following up on your article "NCJW bucks coalition in opposing religion bill" (July 1).

Although we fully support the idea of ensuring an employee's freedom to wear religious garb or take time off for religious holidays, we share the National Council of Jewish Women's serious concerns about the part of the bill that enables employees to opt out of work assignments if they have only a "temporary or tangential impact" on the ability of the employee to perform the job. The "bigots" are hardly the wise women of the National Council of Jewish Women (as Marc Stern of the American Jewish Congress accuses NCJW of being) but instead are the employees who dare impose their narrow religious beliefs in such a way as to endanger the rights and lives of others.

The solution is a compromise bill that leaves in protections for wearing religious garb and taking off religious holidays but does not have broad language that could lead to police officers not protecting abortion clinics or pharmacists refusing to fill prescriptions for emergency contraception.

The Workplace Religious Freedom Act imports new, broad, and untested standards into the law at a time when this administration has succeeded in filling the federal courts with judges who have firmly established records of hostility to women's rights. Religious beliefs

cannot provide an excuse to violate firmly established rights or to endanger women's health and lives. The stakes are too high to pass these standards into law, especially where a compromise bill could protect some important rights without endangering others.

Judy Waxman
Vice president for health and reproductive rights

Rachel Laser
Senior counsel
National Women's Law Center
Washington, DC

Giving aid and comfort

Regarding "Jewish peace activists intensify campaign against war in Iraq" (July 1): A 10-second check on Google.com for "Jewish Mobilization for a Just Peace" instantly yields the "Rachel Corrie Resolution" in Congress last March. Its lead cosigner was, you guessed it, the "Jewish Mobilization for a Just Peace"; "Jewish Voices" was a cosigner, too.

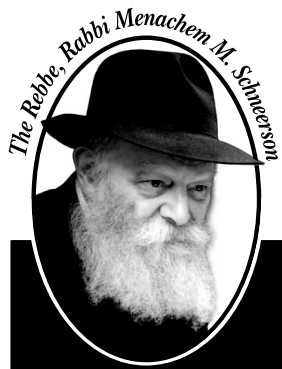
Rachel Corrie was the 23-year-old American "peace activist" who was running around all over the West Bank and Gaza, stirring up trouble for the Israel Defense Forces in its effort to curtail suicide bombings, until she was accidentally killed by an army bulldozer. She since has become a "martyr" of the Palestinian "resistance," a poster girl of the Israel-hating, far-Left lunatic fringe.

The "peace activists" in your article, with their convoluted and irrelevant peace-babble, may or may not even realize the aid and comfort they are giving the terrorists, the enemies of freedom whether in Iraq, in America, or in Israel.

George Sauer
Denville

Letters e-mail address

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