

Family of GM accident victim speaks

“I believe GM murdered my daughter”

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The *World Socialist Web Site* spoke with Leo and Mary Ruddy, the parents of Kelly Erin Ruddy who died in the crash of her Chevrolet Cobalt January 10, 2010 outside Scranton, Pennsylvania. Kelly was a student at Marywood University in Scranton and was given the car by her mother to help commute.

On the day of the crash Ruddy lost control of her vehicle. The car flipped over and burst into flames. Kelly was thrown from the car and struck multiple times by oncoming traffic. General Motors inspectors took the car's black box but have refused to divulge its contents, which could shed light on the cause of the tragedy.

Leo Ruddy: “I know they got away with murder. They say you cannot arrest a corporation but you are talking about people. People made these decisions. They made decisions based on profit over human life. GM never acknowledged it but the company actually does cost analysis over whether or not they should tell people about a defect or just pay the death and injury claims.

“There was a total disregard for life. I believe they should be charged with murder. But they won't go after white-collar killers. If they had done the right thing and fixed these vehicles my daughter would be here today.

“I don't believe we will ever get the full story. All they are handing out is a slap on the wrist and a fine. If there are no consequences they will do it again. But, if you or I accidentally hit someone with our car, we could go to jail for the rest of our lives.

“President Obama, as I recall, never made a comment regarding GM even at the height of it. He never expressed sympathy for the 120-plus Americans confirmed murdered by GM. If you have the head of the federal government not expressing sympathy it is not surprising that the Justice Department is not

pressing criminal charges.”

Mary Ruddy: “I believe GM murdered my daughter. I gave birth to Kelly. We had two children. Tara died from complications related to diabetes August 20, 2009 and Kelly was killed January 10, 2010, four and one-half months later. We lost both our children, one through natural causes and one through GM.

“My brother went to the scrap yard the day after the accident. He said there was something wrong with the tires. The state trooper told me there were ‘yaw’ marks (skid marks from tires sliding sideways). The car looked like it had been bombed. It was completely charred.

“I became a detective. I knew my daughter well enough to know she was cautious. I contacted both GM and NHTSA [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration]. I asked GM to remove the black box and to read it. We had a photographer down there. They took the black box. GM sent an accident reconstructionist and an investigator from Detroit. I told GM I wanted them to investigate for possible mechanical failure so they could learn from it. But they took the black box and never gave it back.

“I believe it was their intent to let me believe there was something wrong with me, a woman with a ludicrous notion of mechanical malfunction.

“I will never forgive and forget. Maybe the Department of Justice can live with their decision but I can't. They are not what I believed they were. It is only by the grace of God that I am not mentally ill over this.

“This gag order they had people sign who settled; there is no way I would sign a gag order when there was wrongdoing by GM. My whole mission since 2010 has been to get the truth. It has taken a whole lot of doors slammed in my face and people calling me mentally ill.

“I love my country. But I could not believe it when we attended the GM recall hearings. Not one of President Obama’s staff greeted us or the 14 families from across the US.

“I voted for Obama but I am very disappointed in this system the way it stands. GM deserves more consequences than fines. They need to be held accountable with the law of the land.

“It is not going to be over until those who, with the stroke of a pen, caused these deaths and injuries are held accountable.”



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