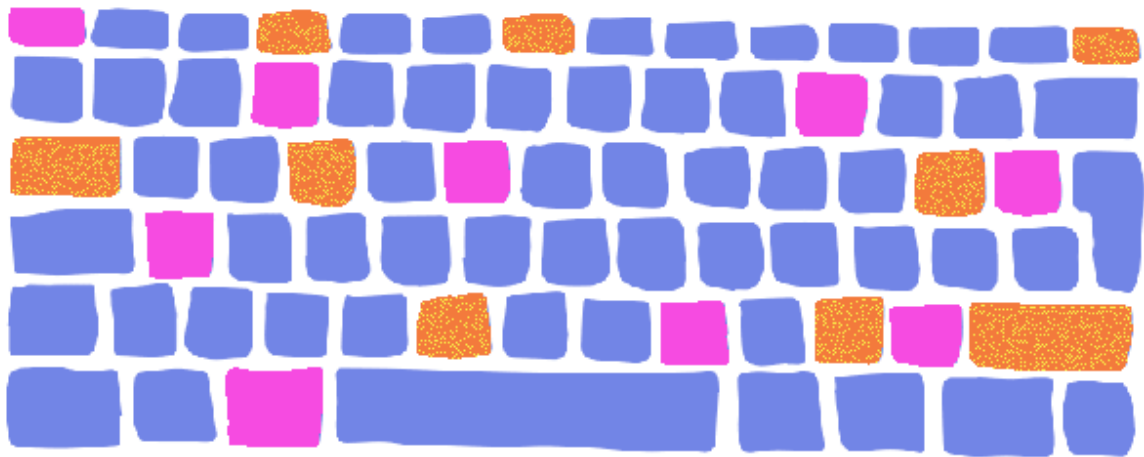


LETTERS

January 16, 2024

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



CURRENT POLITICS

Dear Coop,

The current politics in this nation have reached a critical mess. The right and left battle it out in a tone-deaf contest of wills. The conflict frequently takes on a somber tone. It sometimes seems more like a war. Troubles in the Middle East have a similar ring. Bringing either conflict into active debate will do nothing for the Coop but sew consternation and conflict. We've got a great crew; the ship is steady.

As a successful progressive institution, we have kept ourselves above the fray. Taking the high road is always difficult. Allowing the Coop to remain free from choosing a side will permit peace to prevail.

There is a better path for America, and Israel and the Palestinians. Keeping the little store on Union Street free of such political matters is best. If we put our love and energy into the store, it will come back to nourishing us. As does the crew; keep us on course—in spite of storms.

With Hope,  
*Rodger Parsons*

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## BDS WRONG FOR THE COOP

To the Editors,

I am a retired area coordinator and current member of PSFC. I'm a fourth generation American and I don't belong to any religious congregation. I've never been to Israel. My ancestors came to America to escape antisemitic persecution.

I simply cannot take part in an organization that singles out the world's one and only Jewish state for special condemnation. There is plenty of uncooperative extremism all over the world including Palestinian suicide bombers. It is repugnant to me to think that the prestige of the Coop is being used to glorify one side versus the other in the

Middle East.

The continued publicity that BDS would receive, if we hold a referendum, is an embarrassment to me, your retired employee. Further, if the referendum were to pass, I would have to resign my membership. I wonder how many other employees and members would be driven away too. Antisemitism is wrong even in the name of free speech and democracy.

*Bonnie Q. Kaplan*

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BDS

Dear Editors,

BDS, and their statement on October 7th, makes it a movement unfit for a community that embraces the background of all of its members.

Supporting a movement that attempts to justify violence on a day when people were massacred because of their religion is not aligned with the Coop's mission statement to "make the Coop welcoming and accessible to all."

That being said, it is not appropriate for the *Gazette* to be publishing letters supporting the BDS movement or for it to be considered for adoption by the Coop.

*Jackie Loeshelle*

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## SUPPORT OUR COOPERATIVE SPIRIT

Dear Editors,

From 2010 through 2015, the Coop was engaged in a controversy that could have destroyed the Coop. A small group of members set out to have the Coop endorse a political position that had no connection to the Coop's core mission. The effort ultimately failed. The costs to the Coop were high: countless member and coordinator hours; thousands of dollars for meeting space rental; loss of precious GM time; and irreparable damage to the Coop's reputation.

Prior to the murders, beheadings, rapes, and kidnappings committed by the genocidal terrorist organization Hamas on October 7, the matter appeared to have been put to rest. But following the October 7 massacre, some members reintroduced this controversy. It is ill advised, toxic, and pernicious. We cannot allow the social fabric of the Coop to be torn asunder again. Our highest priority must be the well-being and preservation of our Park Slope Food Coop.

But shouldn't Coop members be allowed to use our resources to promote causes dear to them? Yes, within the limits, as noted in *Gazette* submission guidelines. BDS violates those guidelines. BDS is part of the anti-Israel movement that seeks to deny the Jewish people the right of self-determination in a portion of their historic homeland. Hamas and multiple additional terrorist organizations endorsed BDS as the "Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine." The anti-Israel protests have been violent, engaging in harassment and vandalism. They make false accusations against Israel and call it "legitimate criticism." The anti-Israel movement is discriminatory, violent, and hateful.

The Editors must abide by *Gazette* guidelines and cease publishing letters on this topic. There is no shortage of sources of information and misinformation for anyone interested.

Barbara Mazor

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## BDS

Dear fellow Coop Members:

I am very concerned with the impact that the BDS movement is having on the Coop community, particularly given the brutality of the Oct. 7 terrorist attack on civilians and the massive spike in anti-Semitic and Islamophobic attacks around the world since the Oct. 7 attacks.

I will also share an observation. I used to see a significant number of clearly religious Jews shopping as members of the Coop. I have not seen them since the BDS movement became active in our community. I feel like this has driven away members, and its resurgence after the Oct. 7 terrorist attack is making remaining Jewish members, myself included, *highly* uncomfortable, possibly even unsafe.

I am sympathetic to both Israel and Palestine. I believe in a sound, two-state solution. But the Coop is a community where people have differing views and for the Coop to boycott one side will split our community and feed into a growing insecurity of Jews in our community. I think this is harmful to the Coop. It is more important for the Coop to fight anti-Semitism and, I will add, Islamophobia, in our own community than to target a foreign nation.

I think an isolated boycott aimed at Israel is the wrong way to handle this. If the Coop is going to boycott entire nations (I am not convinced we should), we need to establish clear criteria of what would trigger such a boycott and apply that unbiased set of criteria to every nation we import from. To target one nation and ignore every other nation is biased and problematic. Make it a simple rubric that is used without bias and apply it to all nations or do not boycott any nations.

Thank you,  
*David Michaelson*

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BDS

Dear Editor,

As members since 2010, my husband and I are heavily invested with untold hours of work, in the PSFC.

We are appalled that the *Linewaiters' Gazette*, the official organ of the PSFC, has been publishing letters of support for BDS. It is no secret that wherever BDS takes hold, violence ensues. This is a fact and it is part of the BDS mandate.

Are we now to stop our membership at the because it will become a dangerous, or at best, uncomfortable place for us?

There are many venues where people who want to engage in political debate can go. The PSFC should not become one of them, and must certainly not give platform to one side of the Israel-Palestine conflict, where passions run high and, to many of us, are deeply personal.

Please stop publishing letters that create a climate of hostility in the PSFC for so many of its members who come in good faith, to work and to shop in peace.

*Baila Olidort*  
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