

MEMBER SUBMISSION: BDS DOES NOT BELONG IN OUR COOP

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Photograph by Christhian Diaz

By Barbara Mazor

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Members 4 Palestine (M4P) is a group of members who want the Coop to “enact a targeted boycott of Israeli products as called for by the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement.” As written on their website FAQ page, they want the Coop to commit to and endorse BDS. “The BDS framework offers us clarity around the particularities of our boycott demands, and connects us to a global movement.”

The BDS demand is for the elimination of Israel. It is endorsed by a consortium of terrorist organizations. It is part of the “Free Palestine” movement responsible for the nu-

merous occurrences of vandalism and violence accompanying the demonstrations in North America and Europe since October 7, 2023 when thousands of Hamas terrorists burst into Israel in a spree of rape, mutilation and murder, massacring 1,200 people and kidnapping 250. These acts of cruelty surpassing ISIS were dubbed “heroic” by the BDS Movement.

M4P promotes support for BDS by attempting to vilify Israel and its supporters. They make false accusations, systematically subverting the definitions of legal terms.

For example, in January, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued a ruling in the case brought by South Africa against Israel. The purpose of the ruling was to declare that South Africa had a right to bring its case against Israel and that Palestinians had “plausible rights to protection from genocide.” The court did *not* say the claim of genocide is plausible.

In the March 19 *Gazette*, Jan Clausen wrote the court found “a credible case that Israel is committing genocide” and M.J. Williams claimed the court “held [Israel] is plausibly committing genocide.” Both statements are untrue.

The legal definition of genocide is “a crime committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, in whole or in part.” The key word is “intent.” The intemperate statements made during the days following the October 7 atrocities by non-decision makers and mistranslations of statements referring to Hamas, not Gazans, do not qualify as intent. There is no equivalence between the intentional and gruesome murders of non-combatants, and the inadvertent deaths of civilians during lawful military operations in a defensive war. It is morally reprehensible to characterize Israel’s war to rescue the hostages and ensure an October 7 is never repeated as a “genocide.” Yet, at least 12 times the *Gazette* has published letters by M4P supporters making this false characterization.

I could go on, but *Gazette* submissions have a word limit.

The BDS Movement is not pro peace. It is not pro co-existence. It is not pro universal human rights and dignity. It is not pro democratic values and development of civil society. Its purpose is to provide political support and moral cover for the actions of genocidal terrorist organizations, like Hamas, and to further their maximalist, eliminationist goals. The BDS Movement does not belong in our Coop.