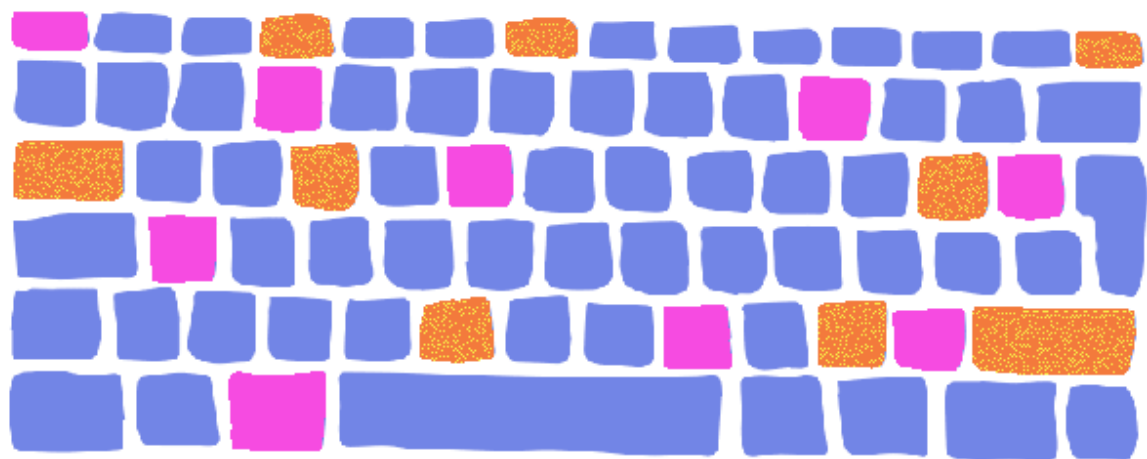


JULY 28, 2026

July 28, 2026

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



LONGING FOR THE BEFORE TIMES (AKA THE AGE OF WIRE-BASED TWIST TIES)

To the Editor,

Is anyone as irritated as I by the new bits of tape used to close the tops of prepackaged bulk items? Before, when twist ties were used, you could reseal the bag and then, when it was empty, save the bit of paper-coated wire for further uses. You could also reuse the plastic bag.

Now, unless you want to spend several minutes trying to coax the plastic seal up and off, which in any case rarely works, you must slice it with a scissor blade or knife and deal with the resulting holes through which bulk contents often spill unexpectedly.

Is the shortened packaging time really worth the savings this new method offers?

Sincerely,

Thomas Rayfiel

Response from a receiving coordinator

Dear Thomas,

Your frustration with the tape used to seal bags is understandable. The Coop processes roughly 6,000 pounds of bulk bin items weekly. One single hopper machine runs nearly every shift of every day. Bag tape allows rapid processing of hundreds of pounds of diverse products each day. Twist ties unfortunately are not a viable option.

Twist ties are preferred for the majority of bulk items, with the exception of olives and the bulk-binned items. Yet we can't always make that happen. Examples of those instances are when a member has arthritis and the twist ties cause them pain, or when shopping is so heavy we are unable to keep up with the demand.

Staff welcome suggestions, and you can speak with a coordinator to understand specific operational choices.

Respectfully,

Britt Henriksson

Receiving Coordinator since 2010 and Coop member since 2003

THE BDS MOVEMENT AND ITS ANTI-COEXISTENCE CONSEQUENCES

Dear Coop members:

4,000+ Park Slope Food Coop members voted to boycott Israeli products, even though BDS stands in direct opposition to the Coop's founding principles of inclusion and cooperation.

I've been an outspoken critic of BDS and its refusal to even dialogue with "Zionists."

After the vote passed, I spoke with several of the people it directly affected including Jews, Christians, and Muslims.

The Jewish founder of Seed & Mill told me the financial hit was negligible, but what devastated her was the malice she now feels from Coop members. Her tahini is produced by an Arab Israeli Muslim family who was dismayed by the news. Julia Zaher, the Palestinian-Christian CEO of Al-Arz Tahina, said she's avoided engaging with the Coop entirely to protect her mental health; a previous BDS campaign against her had already landed her in the hospital with a stress-related psychiatric crisis.

Hadas Lahav, CEO of Sindyanna of Galilee, put the irony plainly: Her products are grown by Palestinian farmers and produced by Arab and Jewish women who've

worked side by side for decades toward peace and shared economic opportunity. As she told me:

“Boycotting Sindyanna of Galilee is counterproductive because it does not advance peace or cooperation. On the contrary, it undermines the very kind of partnership that offers hope for a better future and harms the Palestinian communities it claims to support.”

This is the real record of the boycott: not solidarity, not peace, but a Palestinian-Christian business owner hospitalized, and a coexistence project punished for the crime of Jews and Arabs working together. PSFC Members for Palestine hasn't advanced peace. It has alienated many Jewish Coop members and poisoned the workplace it claims to care about.

Sincerely,

Ramon Maislen

THE LIE REGARDING “INFORMED PERSPECTIVE”

Dear Coop members:

The July 7th edition of *The Linewaiter's Gazette* included a report of the May General Meeting in which a vote in favor of boycotting Israeli goods passed.

The following is an excerpt from that report:

*The employees argued that a referendum “offers the clearest way to understand how the entire membership feels about this issue” and “allows all members to be heard, regardless of work or life schedules.” Caramichael disagreed. “**This is a superior for-***

mat because you can actually listen to debate and get an informed perspective,” he said.

Unfortunately, the meeting lacked debate or presentation of various perspectives. Ramon Maislen, the presenter of the other side was barred from speaking due to a technical formality. The agenda committee never bothered to ensure both sides of a contentious, community-defining vote were even on the table together.

Furthermore, the meeting coordinators chose to run an impromptu vote to skip discussion—something never done before in the Coop’s history.

Nothing says “informed perspective” like silencing the other side and rushing the vote before anyone could think twice.

Sincerely,

Sarede Rachel Switzer

OUR THIRD PLACE

To the Editor,

My wife and I joined this Coop in 2004, one month before the birth of our first child.

Today we have three children, live two blocks away, and for twenty-one years, one of us has shopped here most days.

This wasn’t just where we bought groceries. It was our third place.

This was where we nourished our family. Our children learned the names of Coop fruits and vegetables before they ever walked the aisles of a supermarket. We

bumped into neighbors. Community wasn't an aspiration—it was something we lived.

For more than two decades, over 90% of the food we ate came from these aisles.

I served on countless squads, including running turkeys every Thanksgiving for many years.

We didn't just shop here.

We helped build this place.

I never imagined saying this:

I can no longer walk through those doors with a clear conscience.

Not because of a product boycott.

Because of what that vote revealed.

Since the end of May, my family has felt profoundly betrayed. The discrimination feels real.

Not because anyone expelled us.

Not because anyone shouted at us.

But because we learned this community's commitment to inclusion has conditions. It extends to Jews only if they hold the right political views.

I have watched members express profound compassion for suffering thousands of miles away. I have also watched the tears of fellow Jewish members be questioned, explained away, or overlooked.

When our pain is explained away, our belonging becomes conditional too.

Twenty-one years ago, we believed this would always be our community.

Today, I no longer believe that is true.

I hope this Coop finds its way back.

Because after 21 years, I miss the welcoming community we once had.

With profound sadness,

JJ Berney

Member since December 2004

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rz1oidTYVBs>

END THIS DOUBLE STANDARD!

Dear Coop,

I'm thrilled that the membership has elected Taylor Pate to the Coop Board. Taylor's commitment to member democracy, food justice, and affordability will stand us in good stead. Her enthusiasm for the larger co-operative movement brings the energy we need to help the PSFC move forward.

While the Annual Meeting was heartening overall, I'm deeply troubled by something that took place during the questioning of Board candidates. I asked candidate Barbara Mazor about a reference to what she called "Arab supremacy" in remarks she made at the April GM during a debate over whether to adopt an Israeli goods boycott. In response, Barbara cited what she claimed was a history of Arab domination over various ethnic minorities. This was a diversionary tactic involving another denigrating

remark about Arabs in front of an audience of hundreds of fellow Coop members. Her original statement had been understood as racist not only by me, but by many other members with whom I've discussed it. The General Manager called it divisive in an all-member email dated May 4, 2026. Barbara's comment at the June meeting doubled down on the original offense.

This episode is symptomatic of a larger Coop problem: the needs and concerns of Arab and Muslim members are often treated as negligible. We hear over and over, for instance, about the hurt feelings that some pro-Israel members are experiencing because of the boycott, often phrased in a way that not just dismisses but renders totally invisible the sentiments of Arab and Muslim members whose families and communities have been and continue to be devastated by Israel's actions. Such practices within our Coop community resonate with and may help to sustain rampant anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism in the larger society.

It's on all of us to correct this double standard.

In cooperation,

Jan Clausen

Response from Barbara Mazor:

Jan Clausen's letter is built on selective quotation rather than engagement with the content of my statements. She recasts a discussion of historical context as an accusation about an entire people. She does not address the history. Instead, she isolates one phrase from a broader discussion, stripping the remark of its context while impugning my motives.

My remark at the April meeting noted that the narrative used in the pro-BDS presentations omits the actions, choices and ideologies of the other actors, such as Hamas and other armed groups. The history of Arab-Muslim conquest, political dominance,

treatment of minorities, and opposition to reforms extending equal rights is well documented and deeply relevant to understanding the origin and nature of this conflict.

Moreover, the Coop has now endorsed the BDS movement after more than two years of meetings, presentations, debate, and votes devoted to the issue—despite its being unrelated to the Coop’s foundational purpose. That is at odds with the claim “the needs and concerns of Arab and Muslim members are often treated as negligible.”

Indeed, this has been the pattern of pro-BDS advocacy at the Coop: a predetermined conclusion supported by the selective presentation of information, omission of Palestinian agency, and personal denunciation of those who disagree. That is not honest debate. History, evidence and context matter. Rigorous inquiry is the appropriate response to challenging ideas, not accusations about motives.