

APRIL 28, 2015 PARK SLOPE FOOD CO-OP INCIDENT

The following is an incident which occurred at the Park Slope Food Co-op (co-op), which institution, in my opinion, blindly encourages dangerous political views in the name of democracy, as well as fulfilling its other purpose, and that is to sell organic food.

Certain co-op members also belong to an organization called “BDS” (boycott, divest, sanction). BDS’s primary purpose is to destroy Israel financially by influencing businesses and organizations around the world to withdraw their support and their business from Israeli companies. They have been trying to get Israeli products off the co-op’s shelves for the past eight years. At a prior attempt at a boycott vote in March, 2012 they were soundly defeated by our membership. But they still continue to harass the co-op membership and their last attempt was at a general meeting in April, 2015. They tried to put an item on the agenda for discussion which recommended that Sodastream, an Israeli company, be boycotted and that their product be removed from the co-op’s shelves. This was their latest tactic. Instead of boycotting all Israeli products, which did not work in 2012, they decided it would be more effective to do one at a time.

In their attempt to present their agenda, they showed a video of someone in a uniform beating a civilian. This and other pictures that were shown intimated that this was an Israeli soldier beating a Palestinian civilian. Nobody on the agenda committee attempted to question the validity of this video beforehand and the impact caused an uproar when shown at the meeting where there were several hundred people. Someone on the Board of Directors suggested that this video be taken down. But the BDS faction overrode them and the video continued. This was the most disgusting and horrific example of fascism and anti-semitic propaganda that I have ever experienced anywhere.

As a result, several pro-Israel people disrupted the meeting for 15-20 minutes by shouting “TAKE IT DOWN” and it was finally taken down. During this occurrence, I was told that one of the BDS members assaulted someone from the audience who participated in this disruption.

As a result of this incident, four people who participated in the objection to the video were consequently suspended one year later after a hearing committee decision and the BDS faction remains undisciplined and continues to spread their hatred in the co-op. It is my humble opinion that if this continues, it will eventually cause a breakup of the co-op in which I have been a member for almost twenty years.

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