

Former advisor to Obama arrested for anti-Islam verbal attack in Manhattan



Busted: Stuart Seldowitz, U.S. State Department official under Barack Obama

New York, November 25 (RHC)-- A former U.S. State Department official has been arrested after he was captured in a video calling a halal street food vendor in New York City a “terrorist,” and saying the death of 4,000 Palestinian children in Gaza “wasn’t enough.”

On Wednesday, the New York City police arrested Stuart Seldowitz. He was filmed passing racist and Islamophobic comments to 24-year-old Hussain, an Egyptian man working in a halal cart in Manhattan.

Seldowitz, 64, was arrested on charges of aggravated harassment, hate crime stalking, causing fear, and stalking at a place of employment, police said in a statement.

“A 24-year-old male victim stated to police that an individual approached him at his workplace multiple times and made anti-Islamic statements multiple times on different dates causing the victim to feel afraid and annoyed.”

Seldowitz served as the acting director for the National Security Council South Asia Directorate under the administration of President Barack Obama and had also worked at the State Department’s Office of Israel and Palestinian Affairs. He was later National Security Council advisor to Obama.

Three videos surfaced online in recent days showing Seldowitz launching racist and anti-Islamic tirades against the New York City food truck vendor.

“I don’t think I’m Islamophobic,” Seldowitz said later on Tuesday night, despite his anti-Islam remarks.

In other exchanges, Seldowitz is heard casting slurs against Prophet Muhammad, and calling Hussain “ignorant” for his lack of fluency in English.

In one of the videos posted on X, Seldowitz is shown threatening Hussein with deportation back to Egypt and potential torture of his father at the hands of the country’s intelligence services.

“The Mukhabarat [the intelligence agency] in Egypt will get your parents. Does your father like his fingernails? They’ll take them out one by one,” Seldowitz said, smiling.

Hussein told The Independent the verbal attacks were entirely unprovoked. The vendor repeatedly asked Seldowitz to leave him alone in the clips, to which Seldowitz was filmed replying: “Why should I go. Why should I go? Tell me why I should go? I’m standing here. I am an American. It’s a free country.”

“He cursed me out and cursed the Prophet Muhammad and then threatened he was going to do something to my family back in Egypt,” Hussein said, explaining that he was left “terrified” by the incident.

Islam Moustafa, the cart’s co-owner, told ABC News: “I don’t sleep well hearing those kinds of harsh comments regarding the Prophet Mohammed and asking the young kid if he raped his daughter and all that.”

“The comments that went beyond him [the vendor], and could be interpreted as attacks on Muslims and Arab-Americans and so on, were probably not appropriate,” Seldowitz told WNBC television. “The comments I made calling him out for his support of terrorism – those I think were appropriate.”

Photos posted on social media on Wednesday showed groups of people visiting Hussein’s food truck to support his business and offer their solidarity.

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