



POLICE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF BURLINGTON

PRESS RELEASE RE BIAS-MOTIVATED VANDALISM, 2/6/19

On or about the night of Monday, February 4, 2019, and the morning of Tuesday February 5, 2019, three organizations in Burlington discovered acts of bias-motivated vandalism and reported these acts to the Burlington Police Department. The vandalism occurred at the Ohavi Zedek synagogue, the Pride Center of Vermont, and a third organization that prefers not to be named. At these three locations, an unknown person or persons affixed stickers and posters to exterior surfaces; these stickers showed statements such as “America First” and “Better Dead Than Red.” The stickers and posters also bore the name of “Patriot Front.”

Patriot Front is a group that espouses white supremacist views, and the Southern Poverty Law Center defines it as a white nationalist hate group. Its members have recently been associated with placing banners on bridges, buildings, and overpasses in several states, and these national acts of vandalism may be connected to the bias-motivated vandalism in Burlington.

“The language found on these posters and the views spread by this group are antithetical to Burlington’s commitment to be a welcoming, inclusive community,” said Mayor Miro Weinberger in response to this vandalism. “Now more than ever, we must remember that our diversity makes us stronger, and stand together in the face of a group that would seek to sow division and mistrust among us.”

Patriot Front flyers have also been posted recently in other public locations. The community may remember other, separate recent events of vandalism, including white supremacist posters being hung on the University of Vermont and Champlain College campuses in February 2018 and October 2018. In the case of the February 2018 incident, an investigation by the Burlington Police Department and FBI found that, “the group that placed the posters were from out of state and had no affiliation with Burlington or UVM.”

The Burlington Police Department has opened an investigation into this week’s acts. Public safety is a shared responsibility, and we seek our neighbors’ assistance in identifying any additional instances of vandalism associated with this hate group, and in providing information about who may have committed the vandalism. Anyone with information about these incidents is asked to contact Detective Chenette of the Burlington Police at 658-2704.

Deputy Chief Jon Murad

Burlington Police Department
One North Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401
Office: (802) 540-2112
Cellphone: (802) 735-7143