



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on November 5, 2018

Brooklyn Synagogue Vandalism Suspect Is Liberal, “Queer” Black Man

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New York City police have arrested a suspect in connection with a recent incident of anti-Semitic vandalism at a Brooklyn synagogue: a self-described “queer” black man who volunteered on Barack Obama’s first presidential campaign, worked with a Democrat city council speaker to combat hate crimes, and was taken in by a liberal Jewish couple.



On Friday, according to the [Daily News](#):

Cops committed James Polite, 26 of Bedford-Stuyvesant to the psychiatric ward at Woodhull Hospital in Brooklyn. He is charged with criminal mischief as a hate crime and making graffiti, cops said.

The suspect was busted in the same clothes he wore in surveillance video of his vandalism at the historic Union Temple in Prospect Heights. Polite is also suspected of setting a series of small trash fires in and around synagogues in Williamsburg, police sources said.

An employee at the historic synagogue, on Eastern Parkway, found “Hitler,” “Jews better be ready” and “Die Jew rats, we are here!” written in black marker in the hallways and stairwells of the first, third and fourth floors on Thursday night, police said.

The discovery of the graffiti prompted the cancellation of a Thursday-evening get-out-the-vote event at the synagogue. It also spurred politicians to grandstand before all the facts were in.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, [announced](#) that he was directing the state’s Hate Crimes Task Force to investigate the crime, saying, “The disgusting rhetoric and heinous violence in this nation has reached a fever pitch and is ripping at the fabric of America, and it must stop.”

Jim Gaughran, a Democrat who is running for the New York Senate, [tweeted](#): “What this incident highlighted is the need for a change in our current political climate. Hate, bigotry, and fear-mongering have become all too common in today’s society and that needs to change.” He later [urged](#) people to vote “so we can stop the spread of hate.”

Neither man, surely, was expecting the suspect to turn out to be a poster child for progressivism, but that is exactly what happened. In fact, Polite was such a symbol of “diversity” that he was profiled in the [New York Times](#) last December.

According to the article, Polite, “who says he identifies as queer and does not base attraction on gender, said he felt misunderstood at home” and ran away at age 13, asking to be placed in a foster home. He



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ended up being shuffled through 10 foster homes in the next four years.

During this period, wrote the *Times*, “he found purpose in volunteering” and did so for Obama’s 2008 campaign. At a gay pride rally for Obama that year, he met Christine Quinn, then speaker of New York’s city council. “He interned with Ms. Quinn, a Manhattan Democrat, for several years, working on initiatives to combat hate crime, sexual assault and domestic violence. He also took part in her re-election campaign in 2009 and returned to help with her unsuccessful bid for mayor in 2013.”

Quinn told the paper Polite was “the adopted child of the Quinn administration.” She even helped him get into Brandeis University. (Upon Polite’s arrest, Quinn [tweeted](#) that she was “devastated.”)

Josh Waletzky and Jenny Levison, a Jewish couple who “wanted to foster an ‘L.G.B.T.Q. youth’ on the brink of aging out of the system,” informally adopted Polite months before he turned 21, the *Times* reported. Polite told the newspaper “he considers the couple his second set of parents.”

Instead of being grateful for the special treatment being showered upon him, Polite, who also suffers from bipolar disorder, apparently considered it patronizing. “On Facebook, Polite mocked such ‘hipsters’ as naïve gentrifiers looking to feel good about themselves,” noted the [Daily Caller](#). The day before the synagogue vandalism, he also posted more vile remarks about Jews and called for “civil war.”

In other words, despite what the media would have us believe, one’s skin color, sexual orientation, and political opinions are not really good predictors of whether he will become a hate-filled bigot. Indeed, as the *Times* pointed out in [another article](#), although anti-Semitic incidents are on the rise in the Big Apple, “during the past 22 months, not one person caught or identified as the aggressor in an anti-Semitic hate crime has been associated with a far right-wing group.”

Hatred and envy of others are part of the human condition, and all of us have the capacity to lash out based on such emotions. Those who do lash out should be dealt with appropriately. Others should not be presumed guilty simply because they are members of certain ethnic groups or hold religious or political views that some people find distasteful.

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