Swastika stickers slapped on Alaska Jewish museum, gay bar

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A tall, thin man wearing a hood and a mask was caught on a security camera plastering Nazi stickers on a Jewish museum in Alaska’s largest city early Tuesday.

He drove a scooter to the Alaska Jewish Museum at 2 a.m., placed one sticker on the door and jumped to place three more symbols of hate on windows before driving off, Rabbi Yosef Greenberg, the president of the museum’s board of directors, said, citing security camera footage.

About 45 minutes later, another sticker was placed on the main entrance door to Mad Myrna’s, a gay bar in downtown Anchorage.

Each white sticker was emblazoned with a black swastika, the symbol of the Nazi party, and targeted two groups associated with Holocaust victims.

Written above and below the swastika were the words, “WE ARE EVERYWHERE.”

“There is no place for hate in our community,” Anchorage police said in a statement asking the public’s help in identifying those responsible.

“What that sticker symbolizes is hate,” Anchorage police spokesperson MJ Thim told The Associated Press. “And we’re not going to stand for it, and there’s no place for it. And we’re going to investigate it and figure out what this is all about.”

Spokesperson Chloe Martin said the Anchorage FBI office is in regular contact with Anchorage police.

“If, in the course of the local investigation, information comes to light of a potential federal civil rights violation, the FBI is prepared to investigate,” she said in an email to the AP.

Thim said that to his knowledge, these were the first reports of such stickers showing up in Anchorage. But in Washington state last October, similar stickers were placed on several businesses in Bellingham, the Bellingham Herald reported at the time.

“Swastikas have also become a symbol of white supremacy and the far right, and actions like this disproportionately impact people of color in the LGBTQ community,” said Laura Carpenter, executive director of Identity Inc., a statewide LGBTQ+ organization headquartered in Anchorage, not too far from Mad Myrna’s.

“This is just another example of people trying to demonize the LGBTQ community and Jewish people,” Carpenter said.

Under Adolf Hitler, Nazis systematically murdered 6 million Jews during World War II. Nazis also persecuted gays, mostly men. About 15,000 were sent to camps and at least half were killed.

In concentration camps, Jews wore yellow stars, gays wore pink stars and gay Jews wore an emblem combining the two colors. Other Nazi targets included communists, Slavs, gypsies and Jehovah’s Witnesses.

“Jewish people have 4,000 years’ experience of persecution,” Greenberg said.

He called the person on the scooter, a man believed to be in his late 20s or 30s, a coward whose only purpose was to create fear.

“He is dealing with the wrong people,” Greenberg said. “We are not the people that fear.”

He said the FBI and police indicated it was not a serious or organized threat.

“One guy got excited about something he read on the internet and came and put a sticker,” he said.

Police are asking for the public’s help to find the person who did it and “to make a statement that the entire community is united, that such things cannot happen in this community,” Greenberg said.

With assistance from a local firm, security personnel will be on site at the museum and adjacent property for the foreseeable future.