

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

26 Mag 3367

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

LARRY MONTES,

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

Violations of 18 U.S.C. §§ 249(a)(1)(A),
247(c) and (d)(3)

COUNTY OF OFFENSE:
NEW YORK

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, ss.:

HANNAH BELLER, being duly sworn, deposes and says that she is a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”), and charges as follows:

COUNT ONE
(Hate Crime Act – Victim-1)

1. On or about August 14, 2026, in the Southern District of New York, LARRY MONTES, the defendant, willfully caused bodily injury to a victim (“Victim-1”) because of Victim-1’s actual and perceived race and religion, to wit, MONTES punched Victim-1 in the face with a closed fist while Victim-1 was attending religious services at a synagogue in Manhattan, New York (the “Synagogue”), causing bodily injury to Victim-1.

(Title 18, United States Code, Section 249(a)(1)(A).)

COUNT TWO
(Hate Crime Act – Victim-2)

2. On or about August 14, 2026, in the Southern District of New York, LARRY MONTES, the defendant, willfully caused bodily injury to a victim (“Victim-2”) because of Victim-2’s actual and perceived race and color, to wit, MONTES, in sum and substance, made an anti-Black remark to Victim-2, a Black security guard at the Synagogue, and then proceeded to spit in the face of and headbutt Victim-2, causing bodily injury to Victim-2.

(Title 18, United States Code, Section 249(a)(1)(A).)

COUNT THREE
(Damage to Religious Property Resulting in Bodily Injury)

3. On or about August 14, 2026, in the Southern District of New York, LARRY MONTES, the defendant, intentionally defaced, damaged, and destroyed religious real property because of the race and ethnic characteristics of the individuals associated with that property, and attempted to do so, and such acts resulted in bodily injury to Victim-2, to wit, MONTES, because of the race and ethnic characteristics of members of the Synagogue, intentionally struck and caused

damage to two ceremonial candlesticks at the Synagogue, which resulted in security guards, including Victim-2, and a law enforcement officer at the Synagogue attempting to handcuff MONTES, during which MONTES spat in the face of and headbutted Victim-2, causing bodily injury to Victim-2.

(Title 18, United States Code, Section 247(c) and (d)(3).)

The bases for my knowledge and for the foregoing charges are, in part, as follows:

4. I am a Special Agent at the FBI. I have been personally involved in the investigation of this matter, and I base this affidavit on that experience, on my conversations with other law enforcement officials, and on my examination of various reports and records. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of demonstrating probable cause, it does not include all the facts I have learned during the course of my investigation. Where the contents of documents and the actions, statements, and conversations of others are reported herein, they are reported in substance and in part, except where otherwise indicated.

5. Based on my participation in this investigation, my discussions with other law enforcement officers, my conversations with Victim-1, Victim-2, and an employee of the Synagogue ("Witness-1"), and my review of video footage and law enforcement reports and records, I have learned the following:

a. On or about August 14, 2026, starting at approximately 6:00 p.m., a Friday night Shabbat service attended by approximately 375 persons occurred at the sanctuary space of the Synagogue. Approximately nine minutes into the service, LARRY MONTES, the defendant, who was sitting in one of the rows in the sanctuary, stood up and began shouting, stating, in sum and substance, "you know who the fuck I am." MONTES then proceeded to approach the stage of the sanctuary and physically struck with his arm two ceremonial silver candlesticks with gold accents, causing them to fall to the ground. As a result of the fall, the bases of both candlesticks were bent and certain accents on the candlesticks were damaged.

b. Witness-1, who is the head of security at the Synagogue, thereafter physically restrained MONTES by wrapping his arms around MONTES, and attempted to remove him from the sanctuary to the lobby where there were additional security officers and a New York City Police Department ("NYPD") officer. MONTES stated, in sum and substance, and among other things, "fuck you people" and "I don't fuck with you people." MONTES also punched with a closed fist Victim-1, a woman in her sixties who was attending services at the Synagogue, which caused bruising to the left side of Victim-1's face and Victim-1's lip to bleed and which caused Victim-1 to fall down, sustaining a laceration to her forearm.

c. Once Witness-1 brought MONTES to the lobby of the Synagogue, security guards, including Victim-2, and the NYPD officer proceeded to handcuff and arrest MONTES. While MONTES was being handcuffed, he looked at Victim-2, who is a Black man, and stated, in sum and substance, "fuck you [n-word]." He then spat in Victim-2's face and headbutted Victim-2 near Victim-2's left eye socket, resulting in pain to Victim-2's face that lasted for multiple hours. MONTES also stated, in sum and substance, that he planned to return to the Synagogue on a later date.

6. Based on my participation in this investigation, my discussions with other law enforcement officers, and my review of video and audio recordings, I have learned that following his arrest, LARRY MONTES, the defendant, participated in an interview with NYPD officers during which he was advised of, and waived, his *Miranda* rights. During the interview, MONTES stated, in sum and substance, “fuck the Jews. . . . It’s racial” and “I will never affiliate with no filthy fucking synagogues, either here or in fucking Israel.”¹ MONTES further stated, in sum and substance, that he felt disrespected at the service so “got up, start[ed] some shit, [and] smacked somebody around.” When asked by the NYPD officers why he felt disrespected, MONTES stated that “it’s all a racial thing” and that it was “all religious motivated.” When asked by the NYPD officers why MONTES had called Victim-2 a racial slur, MONTES stated, in sum and substance, “Listen, I have racial issues. Okay, I’m straight to the point.”

WHEREFORE, I respectfully request that a warrant be issued for the arrest of LARRY MONTES, the defendant, and that he be arrested, and imprisoned or bailed, as the case may be.

S/ by the Court with permission

HANNAH BELLER

Special Agent

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to me through the transmission of this Complaint
by reliable electronic means, pursuant to Federal Rule of
Criminal Procedure 4.1, this 18th day of August, 2026.



THE HONORABLE ROBERT W. LEHRBURGER

United States Magistrate Judge

Southern District of New York

¹ During the post-arrest interview, MONTES stated that he identified as Jewish.