

Has New York City surrendered? Mystery as vandals replace American flags atop Brooklyn Bridge with Star and Stripes that were bleached white

- *Vandals managed to slip unnoticed past police officers and surveillance cameras guarding the Brooklyn Bridge early Tuesday and install white flags*
- *They boarded up the lights illuminating the flags so that nobody noticed the white banners until daybreak*
- *EarthCam video of the bridge shows the lights above the towers went out at 3.35am and 3.42am*
- *No hint yet who is responsible for the vandalism*

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Someone has run up the white flag on one of New York City's most famous landmarks.

Commuters on Tuesday morning were greeted with a pair of billowing white banners atop the Brooklyn Bridge after vandals stole Old Glory and replaced them with ones that had been bleached.

The flags appeared to have faint traces of stars and stripes on it. It was revealed this afternoon that the flags were defaced by vandals who bleached them.

The vandals tacked aluminum covers on to the lights that illuminated that flags, so that the top of the bridge towers looked dark. As a result, the white flags were not discovered until daybreak.

EarthCam video of the bridge shows that the first tower went dark about 3.35am. The second tower went dark seven minutes later, indicating the heist was at least a two-person job.

So far, the NYPD has no clue who is behind the flags or why they were hoisted above the bridge - though they don't believe it has any connection to terrorism or politics.

'This may be somebody's art project, or it may be an attempt at a statement,' John Miller, Deputy Commissioner of Intelligence of the NYPD, said this afternoon.

Several officers scaled the bridge and were seen lowering the flag on the Manhattan side around 11am as traffic inched along the bridge.

The bridge is one of the most heavily secured landmarks in the city, constantly monitored by surveillance cameras. Police patrol cars are also stationed at both ends of the bridge.

Detectives are reviewing security footage in an attempt to determine who put up the white flags - and how they gained access to the span.

The support towers are 273-feet tall and it's unknown how the thieves managed to climb them without anyone noticing.

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams blasted the vandals who took the American flags.

'If flying a white flag atop the Brooklyn Bridge is someone's idea of a joke, I'm not laughing,' he told the New York Post.

'The public safety of our city is of paramount importance, particularly our landmarks and bridges that are already known to be high-risk targets. We will not surrender our public safety to anyone, at any time.'

In April, New York artist Brendan Fagan - aka Justin Supine - scaled the Ed Koch-Queensboro Bridge and planted an art installation at the top. He was later arrested and charged with reckless endangerment and criminal trespass.

