

Man Arrested for Synagogue Vandalism Was Active in Two Militant Neo-Nazi Groups

VICE has learned that Richard Tobin, a Base member who was arrested by the FBI in connection to a series of synagogue vandalism, was also an Atomwaffen member.



By Mack Lamoureux



By Ben Makuch



By Zachary Kamel

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A STILL FROM AN ATOMWAFFEN PROPAGANDA VIDEO.

A New Jersey man who was recently arrested by the FBI in connection to the vandalism of two synagogues was active in not one, but two militant neo-Nazi organizations under federal investigation.

A [criminal complaint](#) filed by the FBI last Tuesday against Richard Tobin, an 18-year-old man from Brooklawn, New Jersey, alleges that Tobin with the help of other members of The Base organized a recent spur of vandalism against synagogues. The complaint alleges that Tobin directed the group's "Great Lakes cell" to target and vandalize synagogues in Michigan and Wisconsin.

The vandalism was allegedly dubbed "Operation Kristallnacht" by Tobin, a reference to a night of violence targeted against Jews in Nazi Germany in 1938 that resulted in the deaths of 91 people and mass destruction of Jewish property.



A SWASTIKA AND THREE WOLFSANGELS (THE SYMBOL OF THE BASE) THAT WERE FOUND SPRAY-PAINTED ON A SYNAGOGUE IN HANCOCK, MICHIGAN. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY TEMPLE JACOB

The Base is an accelerationist organization founded in 2018 that intends to hasten the collapse of world governments to build an all-white society from the ashes. The complaint marks the first known time authorities have alleged crimes in connection to the Nazi organization.

While the complaint only makes direct reference to Tobin's activities with The Base, VICE has learned that Tobin is also an active member of the neo-Nazi organization Atomwaffen Division (AWD) and has helped organize propaganda for the group. Information obtained by VICE shows Tobin was also actively raising money to help publish a new edition of a collection of Mason's writings via the sale of Atomwaffen merchandise.

Do you have information about far-right extremists and groups including The Base? We'd love to hear from you. You can contact Mack Lamoureux securely on Signal on +1 780-504-8369, on Wire at @mlamoureux, or by email at mack.lamoureux@vice.com

Tobin's lawyer offered "no comment" in response to this information.

Tobin's active membership in both groups shows the incestuous nature of the cells in the far-right extremist community and just how interconnected they are. One of the explicit goals of The Base is to bring together groups and members in the extremely fractious world of far-right extremism. Tobin operated within both groups under a variety of aliases according to information VICE reviewed, and would bring members of Atomwaffen to The Base and vice versa.

Independent journalist Nick Martin obtained the criminal complaint, which you [can view here](#). The complaint says that Tobin admitted to helping organize the vandalism in a videotaped interview with the FBI, which alleges that Tobin instructed his co-conspirators to "vandalize minority-owned properties." Following this instruction, a [synagogue in Hancock, Michigan](#) was tagged with swastikas and the symbols of The Base on September 21. One day later a synagogue in [Racine, Wisconsin](#) was vandalized similarly. Tobin spoke to the FBI and gave the names of his fellow co-conspirators.

The complaint paints Tobin as a troubled man who considered committing "suicide by cop" or partaking in a suicide bombing. During VICE's [investigation of The Base last year](#), the group was found to have shared numerous manuals on bomb and chemical weapons manufacturing.



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Tobin "believed carrying out a suicide bombing would be 'pretty badass,'" reads the complaint. "Tobin also stated he had saved manuals regarding how the detonation would work for the bombing, and he believed that it would be 'pretty straightforward' to fill the back of a truck with barrels like Timothy McVeigh did."

The complaint also states that at one point Tobin would become enraged when in areas with a high population of minorities. In one incident, at a local mall in New Jersey, Tobin sat in his car with a machete thinking about "letting loose" because of the Black Americans in the mall. In his conversation with the FBI, Tobin said if his "failure was imminent" he would want to "go out in a blaze of glory."

In November, the FBI executed a warrant on Tobin's property and seized a computer, a gaming system, and hard drives. The FBI found that Tobin accessed The Base's encrypted chat and searched for news articles about the vandalism he allegedly helped organize. Tobin's electronic devices, the complaint says, "reflected an obsession with neo-Nazi propaganda, terrorism, and acts of brutal and mass violence." Within the materials authorities say they found edited videos of the Christchurch mass murders, images of murder victims, instructions on how to create truck bombs, and "photos depicting or describing acts of violence against Jews, African Americans, and other minorities."

Tobin has yet to be charged and remains in custody awaiting a mental health evaluation.

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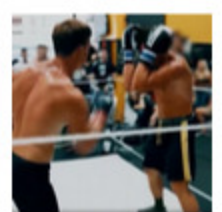


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