



## The United States Department of Justice

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### **Member Of White Supremacist Group Charged for Allegedly Defacing Synagogue With Neo-Nazi Symbols**

#### ***Defendant, a Member of “The Base,” Allegedly Painted Swastikas and Other Symbols on Temple Jacob in Hancock, Michigan***

WASHINGTON – A Michigan man was indicted for conspiring with others and allegedly defacing Temple Jacob – a Jewish synagogue in Hancock, Michigan.

According to the court documents, Nathan Weeden, 23, of Houghton, and co-conspirators Richard Tobin, of New Jersey, and Yousef Barasneh, of Wisconsin defaced Temple Jacob with swastikas and symbols associated with The Base, a multi-state, white supremacist group.

In September 2019, Weeden, Tobin, and Barasneh – all members of The Base – allegedly used an encrypted messaging platform to discuss vandalizing property associated with African Americans and Jewish Americans. Weeden and his co-conspirators dubbed their plan, “Operation Kristallnacht,” which in German means “Night of Broken Glass” and is in reference to the events that took place on Nov. 9 – 10, 1938, in which Nazis murdered Jewish people and burned and destroyed their homes, synagogues, schools and places of business. Weeden allegedly carried out this plan on Sept. 21, 2019, when he spray-painted swastikas and symbols associated with The Base on the outside walls of Temple Jacob.

Weeden is charged one count of conspiracy against rights and one count of damage to religious property. Weeden faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine and a maximum penalty of one year in prison and a \$100,000 fine, respectively. Weeden was arrested on June 29.

The FBI investigated the case, with assistance from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and Hancock Police Department.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Nils Kessler for the Western District of Michigan and Trial Attorney Eric Peffley of the Civil Rights Division's Criminal Section are prosecuting the case.

*An indictment is merely an allegation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.*

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