

Nihilism and Terror: How M.K.Y. Is Redefining Terrorism, Recruitment, and Mass Violence

By Marc-André Argentino, Barrett Gay, and Matt Bastin

On July 16, 2024, Georgian national Mikhail Chkhikvishvili was indicted in the Eastern District of New York on four counts of conspiracy to solicit hate crimes and acts of mass violence. Court filings show Chkhikvishvili was acting on behalf of an organization known as M.K.Y., a violent accelerationist network that originated in Russia and Ukraine. Chkhikvishvili's activities demonstrate that M.K.Y. is pursuing alliances with threat actors in the West, including known leaders of REMVE organizations and online criminal networks. This demonstrates the hybrid nature of the threat posed by this network. Hybrid threat, in this context, refers to the blending of different types of threats, tactics, and actors. Hybrid threats in violent extremist milieus involve a mix of various non-state actors, such as terrorists, organized crime groups, and violent extremists, who employ a combination of methods to achieve their objectives. Additionally, evidence shows that M.K.Y. is intent on perpetrating a mass casualty event, with the hopes to do so in the United States.

On July 16, 2024, a federal grand jury in the Eastern District of New York returned a four-count indictment that charged Georgian national Mikhail Chkhikvishvili with conspiracy to solicit hate crimes and acts of mass violence on New Year's Eve 2023.¹ Chkhikvishvili was arrested in Moldova on an Interpol Wanted Person Diffusion issued based on a criminal complaint filed in U.S. court. Chkhikvishvili "devised a scheme to murder racial minorities and others in New York City on New Year's Eve by dressing up as Santa Claus and handing out candy laced with poison."² Chkhikvishvili allegedly sent "The Mujahideen Poisons Handbook"^a to an undercover agent that had infiltrated the M.K.Y. network and instructed him that ricin would be the simplest poison to fabricate. According to court documents, the scheme was intended to cause violence in furtherance of Manyaki: kult ubiystva, aka Maniacs Murder Cult, aka M.K.Y.'s ideology.^b

The criminal complaint provides a far more complete portrait of the actions of Chkhikvishvili and his compatriots while in the United States. According to FBI sworn testimony, Chkhikvishvili's

activity pertaining to the United States began in July 2022.^c Chkhikvishvili allegedly served as the self-described leader of the neo-Nazi accelerationist network known as M.K.Y. Between July 2022 and the defendant's arrest in March 2024, Chkhikvishvili is known to have solicited multiple individuals to commit violent acts to further the goals of M.K.Y.^d This network is known to the FBI as a REMVE (racially or ethnically motivated violent extremist)³ group originating in Russia and Ukraine. M.K.Y. is known to have a militant accelerationist ideology,^e believing in the necessity of violent, nihilistic action to further the perceived collapse of Western

c These and all subsequent dates are only "approximate and inclusive" to the greatest degree of accuracy possible. "Mikhail Chkhikvishvili Complaint," U.S. Department of Justice, April 22, 2024.

d During this period, the defendant used a variety of pseudonyms, including Mishka, Michael, Commander Butcher, and Butcher. See "Mikhail Chkhikvishvili Complaint."

e Militant accelerationism is predominantly neofascist and transnational, with three distinct yet overlapping activity types that include Active Resistance, Passive Resistance, and "The Movement." Adherents of militant accelerationism intentionally join, infiltrate, or otherwise influence pre-radicalized extremist spaces so as to intensify the mobilization of such ecosystems toward violence. Matthew Kriner, Erica Barbarossa, Isabela Bernardo, and Michael Broschowitz, "Behind the Skull Mask: Understanding Violent Online Extremism," GNET, March 2024.

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a The Mujahideen Poisons Handbook is an instructional document linked to jihadi groups and designated foreign terrorist organizations.

b Other names utilized by this network include M.K.Y., MKU, MMC, and Maniacs: Cult of Killing.

society. According to sworn testimony, the FBI is aware of M.K.Y. members both in the United States and “around the world.”⁴

M.K.Y.’s particular strain of militant accelerationist neo-fascist ideology is fairly unique among its peers. Rather than promoting a steady diet of ‘ideological education’ and utilizing small cells to plan and carry out acts of mass violence, M.K.Y. leans on the individual as the essential actor for its accelerationist goals. Although this may appear similar to the broader accelerationist milieu, there are key differences. Take, for example, the difference in M.K.Y.’s admission requirements for new members and the requirements found in ideologically similar groups. Rather than an interview,⁵ questionnaire,⁶ or other forms of vetting,⁷ M.K.Y. requires prospective members to carry out a violent or criminal act in order for them to be considered for membership.⁸ Other accelerationists do not openly record their crimes and use them as recruitment in this manner. For M.K.Y., the ideological impact of a prospective member’s action matters far less than the fact that they willing to carry out a violent act. The acts encouraged within M.K.Y. also differ from the preferred means and methods of the broader accelerationist milieu. Prospective members are encouraged to carry out these acts against those who have been deemed by M.K.Y. as “undesirables.”⁹ This category appears broad, encompassing racial and ethnic minorities, individuals experiencing homelessness and/or mental illness, and others.¹⁰ This focused targeting serves a dual purpose of furthering the ideology of M.K.Y., as well as decreasing the likelihood of law enforcement scrutiny. A key aspect of these inductive acts of violence is that prospective M.K.Y. members are expected to film or livestream and share the evidence of these acts.¹¹

According to FBI testimony, “M.K.Y. [Telegram] channels have been used to share videos depicting and encouraging acts of violence on behalf of M.K.Y.”¹² The main form taken by these acts of violence are beatings, stabbings, assaults, and arson. In the Telegram channels affiliated with the group, Chkhikvishvili allegedly made specific attempts to recruit individuals with experience/expertise in demolitions and/or chemical/biological weapons.¹³ It appears that Chkhikvishvili viewed a “graduation” from decentralized violence to mass casualty events as the next step that he would take M.K.Y. on.¹⁴

The criminal complaint against Chkhikvishvili outlines a comprehensive and deeply troubling account of his activities and intentions. His involvement in M.K.Y., his solicitation of violent crimes, his detailed planning of terror attacks, his use of encrypted communications to evade law enforcement,^f as well as his threats and boasts on social media all paint a picture of an individual who allegedly was committed to promoting nihilistic violence and terror. These details form the basis of the FBI’s investigation and the criminal complaint, leading to the request for an arrest warrant and highlighting the ongoing threat posed by Chkhikvishvili and groups like M.K.Y.

This article draws on a variety of publicly available sources related to the arrest of Chkhikvishvili and the broader M.K.Y. network to examine the network’s current scale, ideology, recruitment practices, and affiliations with Western threat actors. First, court filings and M.K.Y. publications provide a view into the

formation of the M.K.Y. network. Archives of Telegram channels operated by M.K.Y. affiliates demonstrate the network’s spread into Western nations, as well as the internal culture of these cells. The handbooks and other publications shared within these spaces also show the specific ideological dimensions of the M.K.Y. network. These publications also demonstrate the TTPs (tactics, techniques, and procedures) that are promoted internally by M.K.Y. Through these diverse sources, the authors hope to provide policymakers and stakeholders with a helpful assessment of the threat posed by this evolution in the hybrid threat space.

What is M.K.Y.?

M.K.Y. is a group that was first formed in Dnipro, Ukraine, and later spread into Russia, where it was involved in extremist activities across several Russian cities. The earliest M.K.Y.-like videos were posted on 2chan^g in 2018. However, the group’s origin might date back earlier as Chkhikvishvili, in the first edition of the *Haters Handbook*,¹⁵ claimed that M.K.Y. has been active since 2017.

In 2019, neo-Nazi VKontakte (VK) profiles and Telegram channels began sharing short videos of street fights and attacks on homeless people. These videos, which have been accessed and reviewed by the authors, reveal a dark and violent skinhead and accelerationist subculture where members committed various heinous crimes, often recording their actions and sharing them online. These videos were claimed by a group calling themselves M.K.Y. Based on the 38 M.K.Y. videos that were shared on Telegram and VK reviewed by the authors, there appears to have been 33 unique attacks that were perpetrated in Dnipro. Several of the attacks in the videos feature M.K.Y. leader Yegor Krasnov, aka Maniac. There are also likely three attacks linked to the group that were filmed in St. Petersburg by other individuals. In its propaganda, M.K.Y. has self-identified as terrorists and is ideologically rooted in both national socialist culture and esotericism. It holds to the accelerationist and xenophobic belief that adherents need to start a “Racial Holy War (RaHoWa).”^h As one of these authors (Argentino) has explained, “leadership and members promote the use of accelerationist TTPs as a means to achieve their goals. According to the group’s ideological manifesto posted in Telegram, reviewed by the authors, they believe in a more aggressive form

g 2chan (Futaba Channel) is a popular Japanese imageboard website founded in 2001. It serves as an online forum where users can post images and comments on a wide variety of topics anonymously. Known for its influence on internet culture and subcultures in Japan, 2chan has inspired similar websites worldwide and has been a significant platform for the sharing of memes, discussions on niche interests, and the development of online communities. Minoru Matsutani, “2channel’s Success Rests on Anonymity,” *Japan Times*, April 6, 2010; “What Parents Need to Know About ‘Incels’ and How Radicalization Happens: A Glossary,” CBS News, August 30, 2023.

h RaHoWa, an acronym for “Racial Holy War,” is a term used by the Creativity Movement, a white supremacist, neo-Nazi organization founded by Ben Klassen in the early 1970s. The term encapsulates the group’s ideology of an impending and inevitable racial conflict. The Creativity Movement, originally known as the Church of the Creator, promotes the belief in the superiority of the white race and advocates for the establishment of an all-white society. RaHoWa is a core concept in its doctrine, symbolizing the struggle against perceived threats from non-white populations and the goal of achieving racial purity. “Church of the Creator Timeline,” Southern Poverty Law Center, Intelligence Report, 1999, accessed August 4, 2024. However, the racial holy war imagined by M.K.Y. is ideologically rooted in nihilism and esotericism, rather than Klassen’s original description of the concept.

f According to the authors’ analysis of M.K.Y. communications, the group is known to have used Telegram, Wire, and Matrix to communicate with each other. Telegram was mostly used for recruitment and disseminating propaganda, whereas Wire and Matrix were used for private encrypted communications.

of national socialism rooted in the ‘Thule Society,’ⁱ misanthropy, Theistic Satanism,^j and esotericism¹⁶ as found in the Order of Nine Angles.¹⁷ Their propaganda and publications borrow heavily from the art style popularized by the neo-fascist figurehead known as Dark Foreigner.¹⁸ M.K.Y.’s recording of its offline activities have often been accompanied by horrorcore music, a genre combining aggressive electronic music, metal, and rap.^{k,19}

Overview of M.K.Y. Arrests

According to public reporting,²⁰ in January 2021, Russian Federal Security Services (FSB) in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Tambov, Voronezh, Gelendzhik, and Yaroslavl conducted searches and arrested around 20 suspected members of M.K.Y. The charges ranged from extremism to preparing terrorist acts. The following details stem from Kremlin media and the details around the arrests should be viewed through that lens as they were used for propaganda purposes.

In January 2021, a video surfaced showing the interrogation of 25-year-old Alexey Narzyaev in Moscow, revealing both his involvement with M.K.Y. as well as his refusal to carry out violent acts ordered by a person known as ‘Maniac,’ the leader of M.K.Y., from Dnipro, Ukraine.²¹ In February 2021, the FSB arrested three M.K.Y. supporters, accusing them of promoting neo-Nazism and mass murder.²² The investigation found them associated with the nationalist movement ‘Russian Corps.’ In March 2021, 14 individuals were arrested in Gelendzhik and Yaroslavl for attacking homeless people, filming the assaults, and posting the videos online.²³ In Tambov, 17-year-old Andrey S. shared extremist content and was arrested after authorities found bomb-making materials in his home.²⁴ His arrest video highlighted the intense interrogation methods used by the FSB.

Outside of Russia, there have been several arrests related to M.K.Y. One of these arrests occurred in Romania²⁵ where an adopted German teenager livestreamed himself murdering a 74-year-old woman on Discord. In April 2024, a U.K. teenager²⁶

linked to the 764 network^l was arrested and charged with plotting an act of terrorism. The 18-year-old was accused of ‘preparing for an attack against a single homeless individual,’ emulating the TTPs of M.K.Y.

The Arrest of Manic, aka Yegor Krasnov, Leader of M.K.Y.

‘In January 2020, Yegor Krasnov,²⁷ who was identified as Manic and the leader of M.K.Y. was arrested in Dnipro. His background reveals a history of violent behavior and involvement in neo-Nazi activities. The FSB, through state media,²⁸ claimed that M.K.Y. was set up by Yegor Krasnov, a Ukraine national, specifically for the purpose of spreading neo-Nazi ideas in Russia and committing acts of terror.’²⁹ The FSB claimed that Krasnov had been operating ‘under the auspices of the Ukrainian special services.’³⁰ The tropes here echo similar ones spread by Russia in their justification of the invasion of Ukraine and should be viewed skeptically.’^m

M.K.Y. Tactic, Techniques, and Procedures

The authors reviewed official Telegram channels, chats, and primary instructional material created by members of M.K.Y. between 2022 and 2024, as well as videos dating back to 2018.ⁿ The review of these materials helped the authors better understand the TTPs of the group. Any prospective member being recruited must pass a

^l ‘764 is an online child extortion group created by a Discord user named Bradley Cadenhead in 2021. 764 took inspiration from another Discord Community known as ‘Cvlt’ that forced children to perform sexual acts on camera, later using the recordings for sextortion. Unlike Cvlt, 764 does not only leverage the sextortion of minors but also animal torture, incest, rape, self-harm, and bestiality. 764 force victims to carry out four key types of harm that may be recorded and shared on social media platforms or disseminated internally. These include forced drug use and self-harm, such as non-suicidal self-injury with blades or needles, asphyxiation or burning. They also regularly encourage people suffering from mental health problems to kill themselves on camera or commit mass shootings. New members are also encouraged to engage in animal abuse, being forced to injure or kill personal pets or other animals. Sextortion and CSAM are also key dimensions of 764; victims are groomed to share intimate images to be used to subsequently sextort and doxx them, creating ‘LoreBooks’ filled with sexually explicit content to be shared with victims’ friends and family if they don’t comply.’ Marc-André Argentino, Barrett Gay, and M.B. Tyler, ‘764: The Intersection of Terrorism, Violent Extremism, and Child Sexual Exploitation,’ GNET, January 19, 2024.

In September 2023, the FBI published a public service announcement about the 764 network, warning about the ‘violent online groups deliberately targeting minor victims on publicly available messaging platforms to extort them into recording or live-streaming acts of self-harm and producing child sexual abuse material (CSAM). These groups use threats, blackmail, and manipulation to control the victims into recording or live-streaming self-harm, sexually explicit acts, and/or suicide; the footage is then circulated among members to extort victims further and exert control over them.’ ‘Violent Online Groups Extort Minors to Self-Harm and Produce Child Sexual Abuse Material,’ Federal Bureau of Investigation, September 12, 2023.

^m Russian claims about neo-Nazi influence in Ukraine did not begin just prior to the invasion of Ukraine this year. Putin and other Russian officials have been characterizing Ukrainians as neo-Nazi fascists since Russia invaded Crimea. The mass arrest of member of Maniacs Murder Cult was one of many examples of this type of Kremlin propaganda. Natalia Zinet, ‘Russia Arrests Ukrainian Neo-Nazis; Kyiv Denies Link to Them,’ Reuters, December 13, 2021; Kevin Liffey, ‘Russia’s FSB Says It Detained 60 Neo-Nazis Planning Attacks,’ Yahoo Finance, March 30, 2022.

ⁿ The publicly available Telegram data was collected by the authors using the Telegram API or the export function in public Telegram chats and channels. Videos associated with M.K.Y. were archived from Vkontakte, websites associated with the network, the internet archive, as well as Telegram.

ⁱ The Thule Society was a German occultist and nationalist organization founded in Munich in 1918, shortly after World War I. Named after the mythical Thule, which was believed to be the original home of the Aryan race, the society was known for its racist and anti-Semitic ideologies.

^j Theistic Satanism is the belief in and worship of Satan as a deity or supernatural being. In contrast to the atheistic or secular forms of Satanism, which generally makes use of Satan as a symbol for a person’s own rebellion and individualism, Theistic Satanism is the veneration of Satan as an actual entity possessing divine or supernatural characteristics.

^k Notably, Russian musician Skabbibal likely collaborated with Maniac, the leader of M.K.Y., on several tracks, adding a macabre soundtrack to the group’s violent videos. In the Haters Handbook (3rd Edition), Egor states that he listened to Skabbibal when committing acts of violence. Commander Butcher, ‘Haters Handbook,’ 3rd Edition, 2023, pp. 28, 33. There are also MP3 files and links to music hosting websites that feature songs by Egor Krasnov featuring Skabbibal.

vetting process. The prospective member must proceed to carry out a direct action with video or photo documentations of the activity.

There are several categories of activities that M.K.Y. will consider for the vetting process:

- *Direct Action Operations*: murders, beatings, arson, acts of terrorism, etc.
- *Cyberattacks and Coding*: the creation of malicious codes; programs and websites; swatting, doxing, and hacking
- *Recruitment/Agitation*: searching for and recruiting new participants online, stickering/flyering, graffiti, vandalism, slashing tires, creating propaganda and multimedia for the group
- *Bioterrorism*: the creation of biological weapons, chemicals, and poisons

The group emphasizes secure communications. Adherents are instructed to only use anonymous and secure methods of communication for internal communications such as Xabber, Element, Matrix, Threema, Protonmail, and Wire.³¹ “A member may only communicate directly with the leader or his first or second in command.^o An initiate of the group should not discuss their status within M.K.Y. to not attract attention to themselves and the organization.³²”³³

According to internal documentation the authors have reviewed, leadership of M.K.Y. have implemented a scoring system called “Murder Points” to evaluate the productivity of each group member. There is a minimum score that must be achieved to be considered an active member of M.K.Y. Those who fail to meet this minimum receive disciplinary action.^p Various activities earn different scores within this system.^q Additionally, murder points have been observed to correspond to a system of “levels,” ranks within M.K.Y. that are earned based on the crimes an individual has committed on the network’s behalf.

M.K.Y. Handbooks

M.K.Y. has published three ideological and instructional

“handbooks,”^r not only for its own group, but instructional documents that were shared into other Telegram terroristic and violent extremist (TVE) networks such as 764, Comm, Terrorgram, and other accelerationist milieus. There is a progression and evolution in the TTPs as well as an ideological evolution that is promoted in these instructional manifestos. As of the third edition of the Haters Handbook, there are alliances between M.K.Y., Satanic Front, National Socialist Order of the Nine Angles, and No Lives Matter that are mentioned, indicating the intermingling of a transnational threat actor like M.K.Y. with the threat landscape of the United States and its allies.

Short M.K.Y. instructional guides on planning manhunts and selecting bladed weapons are being circulated. Originally published in Russian, English versions began circulating in 2022, although they appear to be machine-translated. This follows the pattern observed in M.K.Y. chats and channels, where content is first released in Russian and then translated into English using automated tools.^s

“In terms of recruitment targets, the M.K.Y. handbooks seek out those who self-identify as sociopaths, murderers, and school shooters. However, it was not until the third edition of the of the Haters Handbook that there was a direct call to school shooters to carry out attacks in association with M.K.Y. The third edition of the Hater Handbook also contains a personal biography of the founder of M.K.Y., Egor Krasnov, that was not found in the prior two editions. This biography makes up most of the new material found in the third edition. In the third edition of the handbook it is claimed that M.K.Y. has been active since 2017 and that between then and 2023 was responsible for 50+ murders and 150+ ‘actions’— all the while hinting that there are more that have not been made public.”³⁴

M.K.Y. Ideological Dimensions

The two ideological cornerstones of M.K.Y. are national socialism and Satanism, which—per the group’s primary texts—are viewed as being the most “hateful” ideology and religion. It is key to note that followers’ adherence to these beliefs is often surface level at best and tends to focus primarily on the violent tenets or aesthetic associated with them. When describing their version of national socialism, what they are discussing is neofascist accelerationism. Regarding Satanism, they are referencing the practices and aesthetics of the Order of Nine Angles (O9A), in particular that of the Tempel ov Blood.^t Though they borrow their aesthetics from O9A, they do not

^o These details were found in an April 3, 2024, post made on Telegra.ph (minimalist online publishing tool created by Telegram) and shared in an official M.K.Y. Telegram channel that was reviewed by the authors. The post discusses the functionality of Maniacs Murder Cult, which contains basic operational security procedures members must take.

^p Only those in command can assign points for any given action. Similarly, only those in command can impose disciplinary action, the severity of which depends on the failure. For example, when a member fails to meet the minimum murder points without a legitimate reason, they will be fully isolated from the community for a first violation and cannot communicate with anyone for two weeks. A second failure to meet the minimum will lead to an expulsion of the group. The first offense sanctions have two roles: 1) isolate the individual (whom is usually already isolated from peers in the real world) and force them to use this time to obtain the points needed and 2) this reinforces the reality that M.K.Y. is about real-world actions, which is the only way to meet the minimum score. Violating the operational security of the group, snitching, leaking internal documents and information, and staging manhunts are all punishable by death. The authors reviewed official Telegram Channels, chats, and primary instructional material created by members of M.K.Y. between 2022 and 2024, as well as videos dating back to 2018.

^q Points acquired vary based on action, but also based on the quality of filming and brutality of the action. Photo documentation that includes agitating inscriptions, stickers, or leaflets in public places are also highly valued.

^r The first edition released in 2020 is 52 pages, the second edition is 54 pages long and was released in 2022, and the third edition is 122 pages released in 2023.

^s The authors reviewed official Telegram Channels, chats, and primary instructional material created by members of M.K.Y. between 2022 and 2024, as well as videos dating back to 2018.

^t The second significant strain within O9A is organized around the nexion known as Tempel ov Blood. ToB is most heavily associated with infiltrating neo-fascist accelerationist groups and inciting individuals to violence. ToB’s books, produced by its in-house publishing arm Martinet Press, contain graphic scenes depicting child sexual abuse, physical and sexual violence, and more, with the goal of desensitizing its audience against extreme abuse of others. Toward this goal of dehumanization for the purpose of generating terrorist violence, ToB’s training manual dismisses original O9A’s introspective actions for a totalizing focus on violence. “Dangerous Organizations and Bad Actors: The Order of Nine Angles,” Middlebury Institute of International Studies, April 2024.

appear to delve deeply into the esoteric practices associated with its philosophy. Rather, it is the perceived extreme nature of the O9A ideology that is attractive to this set of threat actors. At its core, a primary objective of M.K.Y. is for its adherents to be viewed as the most sadistic threat actors. The ideology itself is rooted in the idea of mobilizing adherents to carry out acts of misanthropic violence.

M.K.Y. worships and seeks to emulate serial killers and other mass murderers. Some examples include the 2019 Christchurch, New Zealand, attacker;³⁵ the Unabomber;³⁶ the Zodiac Killer;³⁷ the Racist Killer;³⁸ and the Dnepropetrovsk Maniacs.³⁹ M.K.Y., in its *Haters Handbook* and in propaganda shared in its Telegram channels reviewed by the authors, states that if more mass shooters livestreamed their attacks, there would be more individuals inspired to follow in their footsteps, and M.K.Y. requires adherents to record and share their violent and criminal activities. By pushing for the documentation and dissemination of their own violent acts, they aim to inspire and mobilize a new generation of extremists while terrorizing the general public. Further, the implementation of their scoring system not only incentivizes violence but also creates a competitive environment where members strive to outdo each other in brutality, further entrenching their extremist behaviors.

M.K.Y. Affiliations to Accelerationist Threat Actors in the United States

It is not publicly known how M.K.Y. first formed alliances with violent extremists in Western countries. Either M.K.Y. sought out these alliances in order to expand its network's reach or Western violent extremists sought to affiliate themselves with M.K.Y. in the hopes of attaching themselves to the group's specific brand of direct action. It is important to highlight that there is no way to determine the validity of these alliances through open sources. Although some of these affiliations may be 'official,' it is just as likely that they are the result of individuals claiming affiliations with these groups for their own status.

The first affiliation that will be examined is that of M.K.Y. and Satanic Front. Satanic Front is the newest iteration of the U.S.-based O9A nexus^u "Tempel Ov Blood." According to its own handbook and propaganda, Satanic Front has a stated goal of forming and training an operational unit that will be tasked to carry out "on the ground objectives as opposed to the whimsical 'esoteric' aims of most organizations and collectives." Satanic Front also believes in the "serial killer rite" as a key part of its doctrine; this rite bears many similarities to the "ultraviolence challenge submission" within M.K.Y. It is important to note that the rituals and rites practiced by these groups lack the sophistication of true ritualistic practice, suggesting that a propagandistic role is their true purpose.

The third edition of the *Haters Handbook* claims that there is a direct alliance between M.K.Y. and Satanic Front, as well as indication that the founder of Satanic Front has been in contact with members of M.K.Y. Contact has been observed by the authors on Telegram between users associated with these respective organizations, supporting the potential existence of an official alliance.

In addition to connections with Satanic Front, M.K.Y. has been observed disseminating content from the NSO9A (National

Socialist Order of Nine Angles) about the topic of "nihilistic national socialism."^v NSO9A formed as an O9A-influenced offshoot of the NSO (National Socialist Order), which itself was the successor to AWD (Atomwaffen Division). NSO9A is the end result of O9A's longtime ideological influence within AWD. In March 2023, the NSO9A website added a page dedicated to M.K.Y. This page shared videos of "direct actions" conducted by members of M.K.Y. between 2018 and 2019. This page on the NSO9A site is the first known instance of a North American threat actor amplifying M.K.Y.'s propaganda. Following this, NSO9A shared a post on its website that described what it calls the "Trident of Association." In this, M.K.Y. is named as both a "sinister sect" and "sinister affiliate" of the NSO9A. Sinister Affiliates are, to quote from the NSO9A, "groups within the NSO9A that break off to form another group at the behest of the Trident." NSO9A's website has been shut down since the end of 2023, and no activity has been observed from it in 2024.

The third edition of the *Haters Handbook* officially stated that an alliance had been formed between M.K.Y. and NLM (No Lives Matter). Chapter 8 of this edition is titled "Weapons of Anarchy" and contains a compilation of previous instructional materials disseminated by M.K.Y. Included in this compilation is a version of the document "NLM Terror Guide," now named "MMC/NLM Murder Guide." This guide contains a section titled "Just Terror Tactics Truck Attacks." It is the assessment of the authors that the phrasing of this title, as well as the description of the ideal vehicle and how to acquire it, is borrowed directly from issues #3 and #9 of the Islamic State publication *Rumiyah*. The second tactic described in the guide is how to carry out attacks with bladed or blunt weapons, which is adapted from issue #2 and #4 of *Rumiyah*. These are preferred by M.K.Y. due to how easy it is to obtain these weapons. The guide also suggests that individuals attempt to carry out a mass shooting or other large-scale terrorist attack, but it does not provide instructions on how to do so. As the guide continues, the tactics suggested become increasingly abstract and far-fetched. Some of the tactics suggested are more performative in nature to add an aesthetic of extreme terrorism, demonstrating that a "Maniac" is one who will do any nihilistic or misanthropic act to achieve their goals.

M.K.Y. Current Targets for Recruitment

M.K.Y.'s first connection to the 764 network is found in the form of No Lives Matter. NLM acts as the English language hub of M.K.Y., seeking to recruit and mobilize individuals from the English-speaking world. NLM has published three original instructional manuals in English, as well as many translated M.K.Y. documents. However, NLM's connection to the 764 network often creates tension with the core objectives of M.K.Y. NLM leaders have been observed to be far more concerned about their own clout and infamy than they are about the impact or frequency of their real-world actions.⁴⁰

^u The Order of Nine Angles consists largely of autonomous cells called 'nexions.' Connell Monette, *Mysticism in the 21st Century* (Wilsonville, OR: Sirius Academic Press, 2013), p. 88.

^v As described in the *Haters Handbook* (3rd edition), "nihilistic national socialism" involves the destruction of current systems and ideologies without adhering to any orthodox ideological framework, making actions unpredictable. The author of the *Haters Handbook* acknowledges a contradiction in Nihilistic National Socialism, comparing it to the notion that a person must be willing to risk their life to preserve it. The stated contradiction for NNS is that an adherent must be willing to transgress their own morals to implement them. The author of the handbook argues that embracing this contradiction is necessary for National Socialists to regain control, drawing parallels to other ideologies and groups that have sought power.

Recently, the authors have observed prominent members and leaders of NLM engaging in online arguments based around three points: 1) ownership of the Telegram channels linked to NLM, 2) whether or not NLM was an ideology of 764 until a specific user made NLM into a group, and 3) the fact that 764 and NLM should not be conflated as they are now two separate entities as NLM claims they will not associate with people involved in CSAM. This type of infighting around ownership and determining the originator of ideas are key identifying behaviors of those in the 764 network,⁴¹ as chasing and gaining clout through malicious activity is the main goal. These same behaviors are key to the point system M.K.Y. set in place, that indicates that individuals in the 764 networks are primed to react positively to that type of structural reinforcement. It is this same type of cultural structure that leads to gaining influence and notoriety in the 764 networks, and it is what determines whether an individual will be considered a predator or prey in this milieu. Though the NLM Telegram channels appear to be more interested in clout-chasing, they are still seeking to inspire others to mobilize to violence and criminality. In a May 2024 Telegram post, the leaders of No Lives Matter announced that the alliance that had existed between 764 and NLM had ended.^w In that same May 2024 Telegram post, NLM indicated that its only allies are Satanic Front and M.K.Y.

Membership requirements for those seeking to join NLM are similar to those enumerated in M.K.Y. documentation: acts of vandalism, animal abuse, and violent acts (beatings, stabbings, manhunts, and mass shootings). The animal abuse aspect is unique to NLM and has not been found in the other M.K.Y. materials discussed in this article. It is the authors' belief that this aspect of NLM's entry requirements originated within the 764 network, further lending credence to the idea of NLM as a 764 offshoot. Animal abuse also serves as a "behavioural marker" of interest to recruiters seeking individuals who are willing and able to carry out acts of real-world violence.

The 764 network's role as a fertile recruitment ground for M.K.Y. has only increased over the past six months. Individuals within the network have begun creating their own offshoot groups, which are far more interested in terrorism and violent extremism than in the network's traditional extortion.^x There have been Telegram channels dedicated to those from the 764 network and NLM willing to carry out real-world actions such as vandalism, slashing tires, "bricking" of car or home windows, and an arson attempt.

By April 2024, NLM had recruited individuals from the more extreme factions of the 764 network as well as from adjacent

accelerationist spaces.^y Examinations of chat records have demonstrated that in addition to targeted recruitment, many users are joining independently, seeking information about how to join, and how to carry out the requisite acts of criminality. It is probable that many of these individuals are trolls or larpers.^z However, a steady stream of violent content produced by individuals who appear to be affiliated with either NLM or the 764 network demonstrates that a sizable portion of these individuals are pursuing the criminal activity promoted by NLM and M.K.Y.⁴² It is essential not to underestimate the potential breadth and severity of the scripted violence promoted by these networks.

The final, central piece of understanding this network is the role of "clout" for participants. Action alone does not bring prominence within these spaces; members pursue infamy over material impact. This is why they openly advertise the crimes they commit and engage in constant doxxing of both allies and rivals. A common form of doxxing within these communities is the practice of sharing the "roster" of a specific channel/chat on Telegram. The goal of spreading this information is to generate more infamy for the participants, despite the fact that this practice provides outsiders with the names of the group owner, leadership, vetted members, and their alliances.

Takeaways for Counterterrorism Practitioners

In conclusion, the recent arrest of Mikhail Chkhikvishvili, in tandem with the proliferation of M.K.Y. into the United States, represents a major evolutionary step for the hybrid threats that counterterrorism practitioners face today where ideologically motivated criminality and nihilism overlap with RMVE.

It is important to understand the intricate and dangerous connections between transnational TVE networks such as M.K.Y. Although these groups operate primarily through decentralized and often clandestine means, their activities have real-world consequences. The complex interplay of their ideologies, which blend elements of esotericism, national socialism, and extreme misanthropy, underpins their violent actions and recruitment strategies. M.K.Y.'s evolution from offline extremism to a significant online presence, and its affiliations with Western TVE actors, highlights the transnational nature of this threat.

The hybrid threat paradigm that began to emerge with the 764 network, which utilized the hybridization of harms of CSAM and TVE, has aided M.K.Y. recruitment. M.K.Y. has also spawned copycat groups in the United States and Europe seeking to emulate their TTPs. Although the primary harm of the 764 network was

w The end of this alliance also demonstrates the power that M.K.Y. holds within communities of likeminded violent extremists in the West, causing NLM to abandon its "parent network."

x The authors have observed a shift in the past 13 months in the 764 network. Whereas 13 months ago, the focus of the community was on sextortion—as well as sharing child sexual exploitation material, animal abuse, and self-harm content—high-profile arrests of 764 founder Bradley Cadenhead, and other members, and the FBI's 2023 public service announcement on the network has had a chilling effect. Several of the communities and key influencers in the network have shifted away from child abuse material and sextortion, and began focusing on offline ideologically motivated criminality such as graffiti, tire slashing, brickings, arson, and assaults. The authors have observed that this behavioral shift has proven fertile ground for M.K.Y. recruitment attempts observed by the authors, as well as the wider acceptance of terroristic material and propaganda.

y The authors have been able to determine this by tracking accounts that have added an "NLM" tag to their usernames on Telegram, or by the official NLM rosters (images with the names of members and their ranks in the organization) that are published in NLM channels and chats.

z LARPing, traditionally associated with physical role-playing games, has evolved into digital spaces, including anonymous imageboards known as "chans" (e.g., 4chan, 8chan). Calling someone a "LARPer" or saying they are "LARPing" in an online dispute is typically a dismissive or derogatory way of accusing that person of being inauthentic, performative, or not genuinely committed to the position or identity they are portraying. It implies that the individual is 'role-playing' rather than sincerely holding the beliefs or characteristics they claim, similar to how a person in a Live Action Role-Playing game would act out a fictional character.

the online sextortion of minors,^{aa} many prominent members of the network were found to have close connections to the accelerationist milieus.^{ab}

The 764 network continues to evolve with astonishing rapidity. M.K.Y. is, in many ways, another step in this evolution. As stated in previous analyses by the authors,⁴³ court records of 764 prosecutions “consistently reveal inclinations toward acts of both interpersonal and public violence.”

The authors note that these networks are moving away from online sextortion—due to successful arrests and prosecutions of 764 figureheads—toward real-world acts of violence. It is important to remember the role of “clout” and notoriety within these networks. The central goal of the 764 network was and still is, much like M.K.Y., the accumulation of “clout” internal to the network, and the accumulation of infamy amongst victims and the public. The central role that clout plays to these networks is what facilitates their fluidity. Members of 764 have migrated so easily from producing CSAM to planning and executing acts of violence because, to them, they serve the same goal.^{ac}

As the 764 network has doubled down on this goal, the Comm network^{ad} has been expanding its operations. In an interview with the authors about the size of the Telegram network linked to Comm, 764, and M.K.Y., Jordan Wildon, CEO of Prose Intelligence, an open-source intelligence agency that specializes in researching Telegram, stated that “there are 1,967 unique accounts across 78 Comm Telegram groups. Beyond these, there are 303 additional

aa Sextortion of minors is a form of child sexual exploitation where children are threatened or blackmailed, most often with the possibility of sharing with the public nude or sexual images of them, by a person who demands additional sexual content, sexual activity, or money from the child. “Sextortion,” National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, n.d.

ab Many individuals associated with 764 initially became known to law enforcement following tips from individuals and/or institutions regarding plans to commit acts of mass violence similar to that promoted by M.K.Y. “Public Service Announcement: Increase in Sextortion Complaints Involving Children,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, September 12, 2023; “RCMP Reminds Canadians of Violent Online Groups Targeting Youth,” Royal Canadian Mounted Police, August 27, 2024; Argentino, Gay, and Tyler; “Dangerous Organizations and Bad Actors: Order of Nine Angles.”

ac Out of 30 arrests of individuals associated with the 764 Network and M.K.Y. reviewed by the authors, 11 of these individuals have moved toward planning and/or executing violence ranging from kidnapping, attempted murder, murder, planning school shootings, one foiled mass shooting at a school in Brazil, and three thwarted acts of terrorism (two in the United Kingdom and one in the United States). “Ouvido em Tribunal Jovem Suspeito de Instigar Massacres em Escolas do Brasil,” Rádio e Televisão de Portugal, May 3, 2024; Pocotilă, Andrei Udișteanu, and Ciprian Ranghel, “‘Am ucis pe cineva în video call’: Rețeaua globală de tineri care își câștigă popularitatea online prin crime, pornografie infantilă și automutilarea victimelor,” RTP Noticias, March 13, 2024; Jordan Reynolds, “Satanist Cameron Finnigan Charged with 764 Crimes,” *Independent*, April 3, 2024; Daniel De Simone, “Satanist neo-Nazi jailed over terror offences,” BBC, March 22, 2024; Diana Meseșan, “‘Am ucis pe cineva în video call’: Rețeaua globală de tineri care își câștigă popularitatea online prin crime, pornografie infantilă și automutilarea victimelor,” Recorder, March 13, 2024.

ad The 764 community does not exist in isolation; rather it is hyper-connected to a wider network of hybridized threats and threat actors called Comm, aka the Community. Comm, or “The Community,” is a nebulous network of Discord and Telegram channels administered mostly by minors involved in CSAM, sextortion, cyber stalking, hacking, swatting, gore, terrorism, school shootings, drugs, bricking, arson, and scams. The 764 network is the subset of Comm involved in sextortion. Marc-André Argentino, “When ‘Community’ Means Cruelty: An Introduction to the Criminal Networks and Behaviors of The Community, Comm, Com, and 764,” *maargentino.com*, May 9, 2024; Joseph Cox, “The Comm ACG Group Linked to Nationwide Swatting,” *Vice*, August 1, 2024.

groups in the wider network. Across 50 of these groups, there were 17,420 members, resulting in an average of 348 members per chat.” Despite this, the average active unique accounts per chat is only 25, suggesting that only seven percent of Comm members are regularly active within the community. The main form this expansion has taken is the advent of various “X for hire” criminal services within the Comm. Swatting^{ae} is the most common service offered, although others include “bricking” (throwing a brick through the window of a target’s vehicle or residence), firebombing (also usually targeting residences or vehicles), and armed robbery (usually targeting an individual’s cryptocurrency).^{af} These services emphasize the shift from primarily online activity to engaging in offline criminal activities.

Practitioners should be aware of this rapidly evolving relationship between what is considered to be “traditional” criminal activity (i.e., gang violence, narcotics trafficking, etc.) and ideologically motivated violent extremism. Adherents of M.K.Y. and its related networks have shown a willingness to engage in criminal activity simply for the purpose of reinforcing the notoriety of their misanthropic ideology. An effective response to these hybrid threats is a holistic response, which treats these worlds as a mutually dependent network of threat actors and criminal activities, rather than as siloed communities. M.K.Y., Comm, and the 764 Network are representative of the growing hybridization of terrorism and violent extremism.

This requires coordination across various intergovernmental teams and levels of government, and international borders, as well as sectors. The goal is to create a resilient society that can withstand and recover from these threats, while effectively countering the actors and tactics involved. **CTC**

ae “Swatting is a form of harassment to deceive an emergency service provider into sending a police and emergency service response team to another person’s address due to the false reporting of a serious law enforcement emergency. The individuals who engage in this activity use technology, such as caller ID spoofing, social engineering, TTY, and prank calls to make it appear that the emergency call is coming from the victim’s phone. Traditionally, law enforcement has seen swatters directing their actions toward individuals and residences. Increasingly, the FBI sees swatters targeting public places such as airports, schools, and businesses. Another recent trend is so-called celebrity swatting, where the targeted victims are well-known personalities.” Sandra Breault, “FBI Las Vegas Federal Fact Friday: The Dangers of Swatting,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, September 23, 2022.

af Some sense of the scale of these criminal services can be ascertained by looking at the prosecutions of individuals affiliated with Comm. Patrick McGovern-Allen, a 21-year-old from New Jersey, was arrested in August 2022 for carrying out a variety of violent, criminal acts for customers in the Comm, including firing a pistol into a Pennsylvania home, and throwing a Molotov cocktail into another home. Brian Krebs, “NJ Man Hired Online to Firebomb, Shoot at Homes Gets 13 Years in Prison,” Krebs on Security, October 2023. Alan W. Fillion, a 17-year-old from Florida, was arrested in January 2024 for running the massive, online “swatting for hire” service known as TORSwats. Fillion is accused of performing hundreds of swatting attacks across the United States that targeted schools and federal agents. Michael Kosnar and Zoë Richards, “California Teen Who Allegedly Targeted FBI Agents Was Arrested for Swatting,” NBC News, February 1, 2024. James McCarty and Kya Nelson were also both arrested for their participation in a swatting scheme, the aim of which was to intimidate/harass possible victims. Both members are believed to be involved in the Comm. McCarty is definitely known to be a participant in the Comm subgroup known as “ACG,” where he utilized the alias “ACG Aspertaine.” “Grand Jury Indicts 2 in Swatting Scheme That Took Over Ring Doorbells across U.S. to Livestream Police Response,” United States Department of Justice, December 19, 2022; “Public Service Announcement: Holiday Online Shopping Scams,” Federal Bureau of Investigation, December 29, 2020.

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