

THE MASSACRE IN NORWAY

Introduction

Focus

In the summer of 2011, Norwegians were horrified when one of their own detonated a massive bomb in Oslo and then drove to a youth camp and opened fire on scores of people. This *News in Review* story examines the incident that left 77 Norwegians dead and explores how a tragedy like this can happen in a country that holds peace in high regard.

Definition

Eurabia refers to the neo-conservative notion that Muslims have been taking over Europe.

July 22, 2011, is a day that will live in infamy for the people of Norway—a country with a humanitarian reputation. Norway’s innocence was shattered as a fellow Norwegian set off a bomb on the front steps of Prime Minister Jen Stoltenberg’s office in Oslo before making his way to a Labour Party youth camp on the island of Utoeya and going on a shooting rampage.

The shooter was Anders Behring Breivik. Investigators have learned that Breivik meticulously planned the attacks for years. He thought that the bombing and massacre would inspire a revolution that would see Europe deport its immigrant population and clamp down on Muslim influence in Europe.

Before leaving a farm north of Oslo to set off the bomb and attack the youth camp, Breivik e-mailed a 1 500-page manifesto to thousands of Facebook “friends.” By the time anyone paid attention to the manifesto, the Oslo bomb had killed eight people and shattered the Prime Minister’s office, and Breivik had systematically murdered 69 people—

over half of whom were under the age of 17—on Utoeya island.

The targets were clear: the bomb was intended to take down the leader of the existing Labour Party government and the shooting rampage was designed to kill as many future Labour Party members as possible. Why? Because Breivik believed that the immigration policy of Stoltenberg and his political comrades was destroying the fabric of Norwegian culture. Despite the fact that this belief was patently untrue, Breivik could not be dissuaded from his position.

Norway responded to the attacks with a call for unity and compassion instead of blood and vengeance. One hundred and fifty thousand people marched through the streets of Oslo carrying roses and candles. Prime Minister Stoltenberg told those assembled, “I am infinitely grateful to be living in a country where, at a critical time, people take to the streets with flowers and candles to protect democracy” (*Toronto Star*, July 27, 2011).

To Consider

1. Why do you think gunmen target innocent victims when they are mad at government policy?
2. How do you feel about the way Norwegians took to the streets after the massacre? Do you think Canadians would have responded similarly or differently? Explain.

THE MASSACRE IN NORWAY

Video Review

Did you know . . .

Breivik's bomb was a combination of fertilizer and fuel similar to the one used by Timothy McVeigh in Oklahoma City in 1995.

Pre-viewing Questions

Norway is one of the most peaceful nations in the world and among the most generous when it comes to foreign aid. Its social democratic form of government seeks a balance of economic development and social justice. Norway's oil revenues have been funneled into a \$350-billion trust to secure its future.

1. Based on this information, why is the title of this video such a shock for most people?

2. How do Canadian values and priorities compare with those of Norway?

Viewing Questions

As you watch the video, respond to the questions in the spaces provided.

1. What two tragedies occurred in Norway on July 22, 2011?

2. Describe the scene of the Oslo bombing.

3. How did the attacker trick people before he began opening fire on the young people gathered at the Labour Party youth camp?

4. What did Adrian Pracon do to keep from being shot by the gunman?

5. a) For how many years did Anders Breivik say he was planning the attack?

- b) What did Breivik's manifesto reveal about his beliefs?

6. Why did Breivik's neighbours find his behavior to be a bit odd?

7. Why would it have been difficult to detect the threat posed by Breivik prior to July 22?

8. How does Breivik's lawyer describe his client's thoughts about the attacks?

9. Roughly how many ultra-nationalist groups does former CSIS agent Michel Juneau-Katsuya think pose a threat to Canadian security?

10. What evidence is there that extremism may be on the rise in Canada?

11. Why does Khaled Mouammar of the Canadian Arab Federation believe that all racist messages must be denounced?

12. What positive development emerged in Norway shortly after the attacks?

Post-viewing Analysis

After Anders Breivik's twin attacks on the people of Norway, Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg delivered these inspiring words: "To the person who attacked us, you are not going to destroy us. You are not going to destroy our democracy and our work for our better world. We are a small country, but a very proud country. No one can bomb us to be quiet, no one can shoot us to be quiet. No one can ever scare us from being Norway" (CBC News in Review video).

1. What message was the Prime Minister trying to send to his people?

2. a) How do you think this message was received by the people of Norway?

- b) By the victims' families?

- c) By other extremists in the country?

THE MASSACRE IN NORWAY

TV *Terror Strikes*

Focus for Reading

As you read the following information about the horrific events of July 22, 2011, make note of any points where authorities, or others who knew Breivik, could have intervened and possibly prevented the tragedy from happening.

A Diabolical Plan

Anders Behring Breivik spent years planning to bring terror to his Norwegian homeland. But the main elements of his horrifying attack really came together in the year leading up to events of July 22.

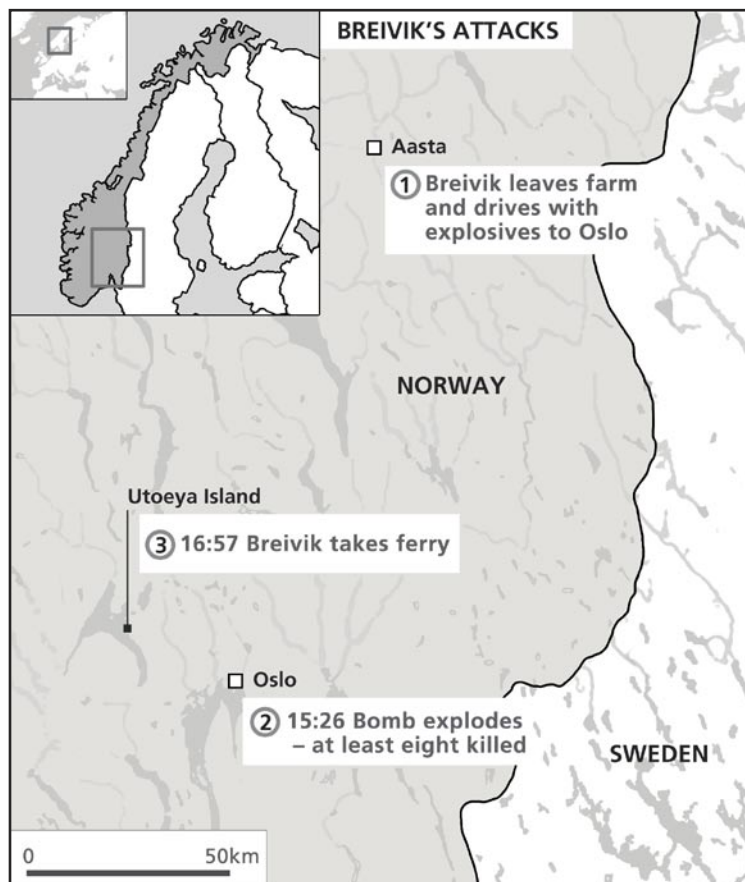
Breivik's first step was to purchase weapons. After a failed effort to buy guns illegally in the Czech Republic, he concluded that it was just as easy to buy guns legally in Norway. In late 2010, he legally bought a semi-automatic weapon for \$2 000. Next he spent three months training at a gun club to earn a permit

for a Glock pistol, which he eventually purchased in early 2011. Around the same time, he ordered some of the component parts of the bomb he would use in Oslo. Breivik also illegally ordered badges from an online vendor for the police uniform he made and wore on the day of the attacks.

By the end of winter, most of the materials Breivik needed to carry out his attacks were in place, with one exception: the six tonnes of fertilizer he would need for his bomb. Breivik's plan was to detonate a bomb similar to the one that destroyed a federal building in Oklahoma City in 1995. However, the purchase of such a large amount of fertilizer would likely draw the suspicion of authorities, so he rented a farm north of Oslo in the village of Aasta and formed a company called Breivik Geofarm. He claimed he would be growing sugar beets, a crop that requires a lot of fertilizer. This allowed him to order the fertilizer without incident, which he stored in a barn on his property. Authorities later concluded that Breivik used at least 500 kilograms of fertilizer and fuel in the bomb he placed in a rented Volkswagen that he blew up in front of the Prime Minister's office.

The Oslo Bombing

A few days before the attacks, Breivik dropped either the bomb-laden van or his getaway vehicle off in Oslo. He then caught a train back to the town nearest to his farm. On July 22, he made his way back to Oslo, moved the bomb into position in front of the Prime Minister's office, made his way



to his getaway vehicle and detonated the bomb just before 3:30 in the afternoon. The explosion was tremendous, shattering windows and starting fires in neighbouring buildings. The bomb killed eight and wounded 30 others. Security personnel working at the Prime Minister's office later told investigators that they saw Breivik park the vehicle but didn't challenge him because he was dressed in a police uniform.

While authorities scrambled to get things under control in Oslo, Breivik was climbing into his other vehicle and preparing to drive 40 kilometres to the town opposite Utoeya island. News networks the world over were reporting that a massive bomb had exploded in Oslo, and authorities immediately suspected the Islamist militant group Al Qaeda. Little did they know that the bomber was a local man who was on his way to carry out phase two of his horrific plan.

The Rampage on Utoeya

Young people gathered at a Labour Party youth camp on the island of Utoeya stopped what they were doing when word of the bombing reached them and started monitoring the news on their smartphones. They weren't sure if the Prime Minister was safe. He was scheduled to arrive at Utoeya the next day and address the close to 600 youth who had gathered at the camp. Eventually they broke off into groups, some clustering around their tents, others in the cafeteria, and a few down by the dock. All of their focus was on gathering news from Oslo.

Just before 5:00 p.m., Breivik, still dressed as a policeman, arrived on the last ferry of the day from the mainland. He waved the young campers toward him, telling them that he had come to provide news and a sense of security

in the wake of the bombing. He told them to come close and when they did he pulled the automatic weapon off his shoulder and opened fire, mowing down those who approached him. The rest of the campers scattered and, for the next 90 minutes, Breivik hunted them. He killed some in their tents, some as they darted through the forest, and others as they sat defenceless along the island's rocky shoreline.

Some tried to swim to the mainland and, when residents across from Utoeya figured out what was happening on the island, they assembled a flotilla of small boats to ferry frantic campers away from the killer. Still, Breivik was able to pick off people swimming in the water. By the time he surrendered to authorities, Breivik had murdered 69 people, most of them around the age of 17.

Aftermath

Breivik did not hesitate to claim responsibility for the attacks. He hoped to use his first appearance in court as an opportunity to share his beliefs with the world, but a Norwegian judge was quick to close the courtroom and throw Breivik into solitary confinement. However, Breivik had already made his views public; first in a video posted on YouTube days before the attacks and then in a Facebook message sent to his 7 000 "friends" that linked to a massive 1 500-page manifesto called *2083 – A European Declaration of Independence*.

Breivik's goal was to inspire all of Europe to initiate a cultural revolution to rid the continent of Muslim immigrants. But Norwegians responded with an unparalleled demonstration of both grief and unity, as 150 000 people gathered in Oslo's City Hall Square in a compassionate show of strength for the victims and their families.

Follow-up

1. How much planning went into Breivik's attacks? Does this level of planning make the attacks that much more frightening? Explain.
2. Survivors of the attacks on Utoeya were extremely fearful when the real police came to their rescue. Why were they so afraid? How do you think the survivors will feel when they see a police officer in the future?
3. a) What was Breivik's goal in the attacks?
b) What do you think is the likelihood he will achieve those goals?
4. Compare the notes you made while reading with a partner. How many opportunities did you identify where someone could have intervened and stopped Breivik?

THE MASSACRE IN NORWAY

Why?

Did you know . . .

According to Breivik's manifesto, he used the video games *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2* and *World of Warcraft* as part of his weapons training for the July 22 attacks.

Focus for Reading

The word *empathy* refers to the feeling that you understand and share another person's experiences. In other words, you have the ability to feel what others feel and, based on this connection, you are able to develop a bond with that other person. Someone who acts with violence does not have empathy for his or her victims. As you read the following information, look for clues as to why this is so.

Why did he do it?

The search for plausible explanations for shockingly destructive behaviour always begins in earnest shortly after a massacre like this one. In Norway's case, regular citizens probed their collective conscience to find a rational reason for this horrific violence—the murder of 77 people in just over three hours.

Was something actually “wrong” with Breivik? Was he suffering from an untreated mental illness? Had he been abused as a child? Had he recently lost a job or was he dealing with another significant source of stress? Or did he lack a sense of morality or compassion for others? Not that any of these would justify the massacre. But a better understanding of why this occurred might possibly help us to prevent tragedies like this in the future.

Empathy and Evil

Modern neuroscience has begun to examine the circuitry of the brain in relation to a person's sense of empathy—their ability to feel what others feel. Professor Simon Baron-Cohen of Cambridge University in Britain became an expert on empathy after spending years studying human cruelty. He initially wondered how people could turn off their conscience and do unimaginably cruel things to others. He pursued this as far as he could before determining that labelling something as evil was an intellectual dead end. In other words, all

he was able to do was identify something as evil or cruel and there wasn't much else to say. His research then shifted away from a study of evil to the absence of empathy in people.

According to Baron-Cohen, empathy is a natural human ability. People *want* to feel what others feel. This provides them with an understanding of what motivates and inspires others. Empathy allows for the growth of caring and compassion. The actions of Breivik point to an absence of empathy. In other words, Breivik had somehow shut off his ability to feel what others feel. He managed to turn his victims into objects that were as significant to him as images that pop up on the screen of a first-person-shooter video game.

Baron-Cohen claims that an inability to feel empathy can emerge through:

- genetic problems
- damage to the brain, in particular to the amygdala in the pre-frontal cortex
- an abusive or neglectful childhood
- other social factors that erode empathy

Source: “The anatomy of evil” by Elizabeth Renzetti (*The Globe and Mail*, July 30, 2011)

It is the last item on the list that has become most evident to investigators gathering information in the Breivik case. Over the years, Breivik isolated himself from others and became obsessed with the idea that Muslim immigration was destroying the fabric

of Norwegian culture. He spent a great deal of time online with like-minded individuals who espoused the same beliefs. Eventually he concluded that action had to be taken to demonstrate what he believed — however mistaken or twisted those beliefs were. And somewhere in the process, he lost his ability to feel empathy for his fellow human beings.

All people have the ability to feel empathy to some degree. In Breivik's case, his empathic abilities were severely diminished. One lesson that can be drawn from the nightmare he delivered to the world in July 2011 is the need to practise empathy. If empathy works through the brain's circuitry, it is essential to exercise that part of the brain so that one's empathic abilities improve.

Analysis

1. This section concludes with the statement that one lesson we can learn from this is that it is important to practise empathy. What other lessons can be learned from this tragedy?
2. If Breivik suffered from a genetic problem or brain damage, how responsible is he for the actions he took on July 22, 2011?
3. In your view, are people naturally inclined to empathy as Simon Baron-Cohen suggests or are people naturally inclined to evil? Or to both?
4. This section focuses on the role of empathy, or lack thereof, in violent crimes. Investigators have also learned that Breivik was racist and influenced by other racists, and that he was estranged from his father. How might these factors have influenced his behaviour?

THE MASSACRE IN NORWAY

The Victims

Did you know . . .
Breivik killed 69
people on Utoeya
island.

Focus for Reading

When Anders Breivik opened fire on the innocent people gathered at the Labour Party youth camp he was essentially trying to destroy the political future of Norway. The Labour Party has been the dominant force in Norwegian politics for the last 80 years and currently holds the balance of power in a coalition government led by Jens Stoltenberg. Those gathered on Utoeya island were young people who were bright and politically active. But they were also just kids. Many were under the age of 17. As you read the following tributes to a few of the victims, ask yourself how it is possible that Breivik could have seen these young people as a threat.

The Victims of July 22, 2011

Trond Berntsen, 51, was an off-duty police officer hired to provide security at the camp. Berntsen was at the camp with his 10-year-old son. When Breivik arrived Bernsten got his son out of danger before he himself was killed. According to one eyewitness account, Breivik approached the boy after killing the father, and the boy said: “Now you’ve killed my dad. Let us alone” (*Huffington Post*, July 23, 2011). Surprisingly, Breivik turned away from the boy and searched for other victims.

Tore Eikeland, 21, was called “one of the most talented young politicians [in Norway]” by Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. Eikeland addressed the Labour Party convention the spring before he was killed by Breivik.

Hanne Kristine Fridtun, 19, was a community activist who addressed Norway’s Labour Party at its conference in April 2011. She told her audience, “We want the right to live in the best

possible world. We want openness, better work conditions and a better deal for pensioners” (“Stories behind Norway’s victims emerge,” MSNBC, www.msnbc.msn.com). Apparently Fridtun sent a message from her phone asking for help shortly before she was killed.

Gunnar Linakar, 23, was the son of a Labour Party activist. Linakar called his father during the attack and told him that someone was shooting people at the camp. According to some witnesses, Linakar acted as a human shield for other younger campers before he was shot and killed. Linakar’s father, Roald, said his son was “a calm, big teddy bear with lots of humour and lots of love” (“Stories behind Norway’s victims emerge,” MSNBC, www.msnbc.msn.com).

Johannes Buoe, 14, was described by his parents as “an independent boy with a good sense of humour” (BBC News, August 2, 2011). He was interested in dogs, snowmobiling, and took an active part in the youth community.

The Victims of July 22, 2011

Monda Adbinur, 18	Ronja Soetter Johansen, 17
Ismail Haji Ahmed, 19	Maria Maagerø Johannesen, 17
Thomas Margido Antonson, 16	Sondre Kjøeren, 17
Porntip Ardem, 21	Margrethe Boeyum Kloeven, 16
Modupe Ellen Awoyemi, 15	Syvert Knudsen, 17
Lene Maria Bergum, 19	Andres Kristiansen, 18
Kevin Daae Berland, 15	Elisabeth Troennes Lie, 16
Torjus Jakobsen Blattmann, 17	Tamta Lipartelliani, 23
Sverre Flate Bjorkavåg, 28	Jon Vegard Lervag, 32
Monica Boesei, 45	Hanne Ekroll Loevlie, 30
Carina Borgund, 18	Eva Kathinka Lütken, 17
Johannes Buø, 14	Even Flugstad Malmedal, 18
Asta Sofie Helland Dahl, 16	Tarald Kuven Mjelde, 18
Sondre Furseth Dale, 17	Ruth Benedicte Vatndal Nilsen, 15
Monica Iselin Didriksen, 18	Håkon Ødegaard, 17
Gizem Dogan, 17	Emil Okkenhaug, 15
Bendik Rosnaes Ellingsen, 18	Diderick Aamodt Olsen, 19
Andreas Edvardsen, 18	Henrik André Pedersen, 27
Hanna Endresen, 61	Rolf Christopher Johansen Perreau, 25
Aleksander Aas Eriksen, 16	Karar Mustafa Qasim, 19
Andrine Bakkene Espeland, 16	Bano Abobakar Rashid, 18
Hanne Blach Fjalestad, 43	Henrik Rasmussen, 18
Silje Merete Fjellbu, 17	Synne Roeyenland, 18
Andreas Dalby Grønnesby, 17	Ida Beathe Rogne, 17
Snorre Haller, 30	Simon Saebo, 18,
Kai Hauge, 33	Kjersti Sandberg, 26
Rune Havdal, 43	Marianne Sandvik, 16
Guro Vartdal Håvoll, 18	Fredrik Lund Schjetne, 18
Ingrid Berg Heggelund, 18	Lejla Selaci , 17
Ida Marie Hill, 34	Birgitte Smetbak, 15
Karin Elena Holst, 15	Isabel Victoria Green Sogn, 17
Anne Lise Holter, 51	Silje Stamneshagen, 18
Eivind Hovden, 17	Victoria Stenberg, 17
Jamil Rafal Mohammad Jamil, 20	Tina Sukuvara, 18
Steinar Jessen, 16	Sharidyn Svebakk-Bohn, 14
Espen Joergensen, 17	Havard Vederhus, 21

Sources: "Norway attacks: The victims," BBC (www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14276074); "Stories behind Norway's victims emerge," MSNBC (www.msnbc.msn.com)

Follow-up

Conduct additional research to locate all the names of those who were victims of the Oslo bombing then create a name collage.

OR

Make a picture collage in a program like PowerPoint using as many photos of Breivik's victims as possible. You can look for pictures from the websites listed above.

THE MASSACRE IN NORWAY

Activity: How should we remember?

Five days after Anders Behring Breivik detonated a bomb in Oslo and murdered scores of young people on Utoeya island, *The Globe and Mail* ran an editorial entitled "His 15 minutes are up" (July 27, 2011). What was said in this editorial was that although in the immediate aftermath of the massacre Breivik had received extensive media coverage it was now time to forget about him.

In fact, the editorial never mentioned Breivik by name. Instead it referred to him as "whatshisname." The editorial warns, "Any country can produce a man like whatshisname. Perhaps it is a surprise that there aren't more such people in the world" and concludes with the statement, "His 15 minutes are now, to all intents and purposes, done."

The reason the editor wrote this is that in most cases of mass murder, the shooter becomes famous while no one knows the names of the victims. The shooter often wants to become famous, wants people to talk about him. So the media should not take part in giving perpetrators of violence the satisfaction of seeing their name in print over and over.

With this in mind, complete one of the following tasks.

Option 1: Forget About the Murderer?

Take a position for or against *The Globe and Mail's* editorial. What do you think? Should the media stop identifying people like Breivik shortly after they execute their murderous plans? Or do the media have an obligation to report on people like Breivik in the hopes of coming to some kind of understanding of what motivated their crimes? Can such reporting unearth satisfactory explanations without specifically identifying the perpetrators of these horrible crimes? Write your conclusions in a brief explanatory report.

Length of report: 500 words

Option 2: Remembering the Victims

Too often the focus of attention after a horrifying event like the attacks in Oslo falls on the perpetrator of the atrocities. Many are left to wonder: what about the victims?

Your task is to write a tribute to one of the victims of the massacre. It should be a compassionate account of the person's life and should focus on the lessons that can be learned from the attacks.

Length of tribute: 500 words

For a detailed review of the lives of many of those killed go the BBC website (www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14276074) or the SKY news website (<http://news.sky.com/home/article/16037474>).