

Synopsis of Oslo, Norway Shooting



Introduction

At approximately 3:30 PM on July 22, 2011, a 32-year-old Norwegian, identified as Anders Behring Breivik, set off a bomb in Oslo's center. The explosion blew out windows of the Prime Minister's building and damaged the Finance and Oil Ministry buildings, sending blood-covered victims running for safety. Eight people died as a result of the explosion.

Meanwhile, Breivik headed for the annual summer camp of the Norwegian Labour Party, where 600 young people had gathered to barbeque, swim, and talk politics. As the teenagers gathered inside a camp building to receive an update on the bombing in Oslo, they heard shooting outside. They initially believed it to be some kind of joke. Breivik, dressed as a police officer and wearing earplugs, stood on a rock. The 32-year-old told the teenagers to come closer so that he could inform them about the attack against their party leader's office, then pulled weapons and ammunition from a bag and started shooting. A 15-year-old said she heard gunshots, but then saw a police officer and thought she was safe. He then started shooting people right before her eyes.

The shooter chased the teens across the small island, executing them one by one. Teenagers fled screaming in panic, many leaping into the water in an attempt to save themselves; but the shooter began spraying them with gunfire. The shooter laughed and cheered as he shot the teens. Several victims pretended they were dead to survive, but after shooting the victims with one gun, he shot them again in the head with a shotgun.

Police arrived at the island massacre about an hour and a half after the gunman first opened fire, slowed because they didn't have quick access to a helicopter and then couldn't find a boat to make their way to the scene just several hundred yards offshore. The assailant surrendered when police finally reached him, after claiming 69 lives.

Motivation

Breivik posted a 1500-page manifesto on-line prior to the attack, which investigators described as "cryptic." The manifesto described how to acquire explosives and contained pictures of Breivik. He posted a single quote by a British philosopher on his Twitter account, which stated "*One person with a belief is equal to the force of 100,000 who have only interests.*" On his Facebook site, the 32-year-old labels himself as a Christian conservative who is a CEO and runs a company.

He stood against any kind of multicultural society. Breivik claimed he carried out the attacks as part of a network of modern-day crusaders – the Knights Templar – to launch a revolution against a Europe spoiled by Muslim immigration, and that there are additional cells ready to strike.

Breivik also had links with the far-right English Defence League; he was a member of the Norwegian Defence League, an offshoot of the British group.

Profile

An acquaintance said Breivik became a right-wing extremist in his late 20s. He expressed strong nationalistic views in online debates and had been a strong opponent of multi-culturalism.

Anders Behring Breivik was described by neighbors as a nice, peaceful young man who up to a month before the attacks lived with his 60-year-old mother in downtown Oslo. He had an interest in computers. Breivik moved to a farm after moving out of his mother's apartment.

An employee of a farm supply store said they had alerted police earlier in the day that Breivik bought six metric tons of fertilizer, which can be used in homemade bombs. That's at least one metric ton more than was found at his farm. Breivik also used eBay to buy his bomb-making ingredients from suppliers around the world. He used shotguns, handguns, and automatic weapons in the attack at the political youth camp.

He bragged to friends of having had plastic surgery a decade earlier to make him look more Aryan.

Following his arrest, he requested not to be given Halal meat (permissible according to Islamic law). Following the refusal of his request to wear a military uniform, he states he will only wear a red Lacoste (expensive UK men's fashion ware) jumper during public appearances.

SME Analysis

Despite the despicable nature of Breivik's actions, it's important to remember that these incidents—while clearly “high impact” events in terms of potential injury and/or loss of life--remain relatively infrequent, low probability, occurrences.

Nonetheless, in addition to reinforcing the reality that these events are not just phenomena of the United States, this incident highlights the continued vulnerability of large public gatherings to this type of attack. It also underlines the need for attendees to incorporate such individual “survival mindset” strategies as:

Assessing: Be aware of the possibility that an incident like this can occur and be prepared to react accordingly.

Evacuating: Consider evacuating the area if safe to do so; evacuees should leave behind their belongings, visualize their entire escape route before beginning to move.

Hiding: If evacuating the area is not possible, consider hiding in a secure area (preferably a designated shelter location); lock the door, blockade the door with heavy furniture, cover all windows, turn off all lights, silence any electronic devices, lie on the floor, and remain silent.

Taking Action: If neither evacuating the area nor seeking shelter is possible, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by throwing objects, using aggressive force, and yelling.