

Fascist Anders Breivik defends mass killings as trial opens in Norway

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On day two of his trial, Anders Breivik gave an hour-long defence of his slaughter of 77 people—mainly members of the Norwegian Labour Party youth section—in Oslo and the island of Utoeya last July 22 and said that he would do it again.

Calling his massacre “the most sophisticated and spectacular political attack” in Europe since the Second World War, Breivik described himself as commander in an anti-communist, anti-Islamic “resistance” movement, at war against immigrants, Muslims and what he called a “Marxist dictatorship” in Norway.

Despite Breivik’s own insistence on the political nature of his crime, the preceding investigation and the trial itself are largely focused on the question of the killer’s sanity. Just days before the trial opened, a second report by court-appointed psychiatrists declared that Breivik should not be considered criminally insane, contradicting a previous assessment in November 2011.

The latest report was compiled over several months by two psychiatrists who conducted interviews with Breivik and observed his activity over long periods of time. But it by no means settles the question of Breivik’s sanity in the eyes of the court.

With two conflicting reports now having been presented, the court could yet conclude that the level of doubt about Breivik’s mental state is sufficient to declare him criminally insane. This would result in his serving his detention in a mental health institution rather than in prison.

The debate has served to obscure numerous questions over the role of the state and security forces in failing to prevent Breivik’s attacks. In January, it emerged that Breivik had warned Norwegian police in March 2011 that he was preparing a massacre of Labour Party youth members. This information was supposedly not communicated to the relevant authorities until after July

22.

This came on top of revelations about the failure of the intelligence services to detect Breivik’s purchase of large quantities of fertiliser from Poland, as well as their failure to investigate a farm which he rented on the outskirts of Oslo, where he prepared his attacks. The head of Norway’s intelligence service was compelled to resign as a result.

Evidence continues to mount of Breivik’s links with right-wing groups throughout Europe, contradicting the official presentation of him as a “lone wolf”. The latest psychiatric report noted that Breivik has received a significant number of letters supporting his views whilst he has been in prison.

This is in addition to Breivik’s 1,500-page “manifesto”, which he published online and sent to over 1,000 contacts just hours before carrying out the massacre. In it, he stressed that the aim of his attack was to bring about a “cultural-conservative revolution” across Europe against “cultural Marxism”. He stated that he intended to use the trial resulting from the killings to propagandise for his fascist cause.

The unwillingness to confront the ideological and political roots of Breivik’s crimes is bound up with the complicity of the ruling elite, both in Norway and throughout Europe, in fostering far-right forces like the 33-year-old terrorist.

Breivik’s claims notwithstanding, Norway’s Labour Party consistently promoted anti-immigrant sentiment over the past decade, adopting much of the rhetoric of the right-wing Progress Party of which Breivik was a member for a decade until 2007.

Labour’s latest proposal, under the guise of tackling “human trafficking”, will grant police the power to deport immigrants who are deemed to be “beggars”, even though begging is not an offence under

Norwegian law.

In his prepared statement, Breivik pointed out that “the three most powerful politicians in Europe” shared his views, saying, “Sarkozy, Merkel and Cameron have all noted that multiculturalism doesn’t work”.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and British Prime Minister David Cameron have both pronounced on the “failure” of “multiculturalism”, while Nicolas Sarkozy in his re-election campaign for the French presidency is seeking to outflank the anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim agitation of the neo-fascist National Front. Anti-Islamic propaganda is now par for the course for the European bourgeoisie, backed up with bans on Muslim dress and other anti-democratic measures.

Recent months have also seen the exposure of the role of the German intelligence services in facilitating and collaborating with a fascist organisation that carried out a succession of terror attacks over a decade.

Just two weeks before the start of Breivik’s trial, a demonstration was held in Denmark at the initiation of the English Defence League (EDL) and its Danish counterparts that was aimed at launching a European-wide far-right organisation. Participants attended from Germany, Poland and Sweden.

A report in the *Guardian* noted the growth of far-right, neo-fascist organisations internationally since Breivik’s terrorist attacks, describing a “network of foundations, bloggers, political activists and street gangs” that have united to form the “Stop Islamisation of Nations” group.

A key forum for coordinating this group has been the Gates of Vienna blog based in the United States, to which Breivik contributed regularly prior to carrying out his massacre.

The organisation is intending to hold a summit in New York to coincide with the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks at which figures such as Paul Weston, leader of the British Freedom Party — the political wing of the EDL—will be featured speakers. In his Internet manifesto, Breivik cited blog postings by Weston on the subject of a “European civil war” between the West and Islam.

The re-emergence of fascist terrorism is taking place under conditions of a deepening crisis of the capitalist system across the globe and a massive assault on the living standards and basic rights of the working class. The growth of far-right and fascist tendencies is being

facilitated by the bourgeois state and all of the official political parties, including those nominally on the “left”. These forces are being cultivated to be thrown against the emerging mass struggles of the working class.



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