

Highland Park shooter charged with 7 counts of first-degree murder, considered second shooting in Madison, Wisconsin

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6 July 2022

On the morning of July 6, Highland Park, Illinois, shooting suspect Robert Crimo III confessed to prosecutors he committed a pre-meditated attack on the Fourth of July parade which left seven dead and 46 wounded after firing more than 80 rounds from a rooftop into the crowd. The death toll is subject to change given the severity of the injuries inflicted.

Crimo is currently being held without bail and charged with seven counts of first-degree murder. A preliminary hearing is set for July 28 with Crimo facing the possibility of life imprisonment without parole. There is no indication anyone else was directly involved with the attack.

New details regarding Crimo's actions before and after the shooting have come to light since he was taken into custody by Illinois police on the night of July 4th. One of the most alarming developments is that Crimo reportedly considered committing a second mass shooting in Madison, Wisconsin, after he was able to evade the police and flee Highland Park. He also dumped his phone in nearby Middleton, Wisconsin, less than 10 miles west of downtown Madison, in an effort to throw the authorities off his tracks.

Authorities have said that Crimo had planned his attack in Highland Park for weeks and legally bought multiple rifles, along with large quantities of ammunition. On the morning of the attack, he disguised himself in women's clothing and covered his facial and neck tattoos in make-up to avoid being recognized. Crimo climbed up a fire escape of an office building in the area of Central Avenue and 2nd Street and began shooting from the roof into the crowd along the parade at 10:14 a.m.

After firing about 80 rounds, Crimo escaped into the

panicked crowd still disguised and fled the scene. Still armed he took his mother's car and fled 140 miles away on an approximately two and half hour drive to Madison in an attempt to mislead authorities.

According to Lake County Major Crimes Task Force spokesman Sgt. Christopher Covelli, the 21-year-old suspect "seriously contemplated doing another shooting in Madison." Crimo had a second semi-automatic rifle with him, along with 60 rounds of ammunition as he traveled to the Wisconsin state capital. Sgt. Covelli added that upon entering the city, Crimo "saw a large fest and began considering an attack" but "hadn't put enough thought or research into it." Crimo also may have been dissuaded by the poor weather in Madison which at the time included large rolling thunderstorms. It remains unclear which event or festival he was considering attacking.

Crimo dumped his phone in Middleton before driving back to his hometown of Highwood, a suburb adjoining Highland Park, and was apprehended after a resident noticed that his vehicle matched the description of a vehicle fleeing the scene of the shooting and called it in to police.

The WSWS has already reported on the fascistic, right-wing pro-Trump leanings Crimo shared on social media under his rapper name "Awake," as well as past actions such as hoarding knives and threatening to kill his family. Highland Park police were aware of all this before the shooting.

However, when purchasing his weapons, Crimo's background check came up clean because he had only one offense: A January 2016 ordinance violation for possession of tobacco and no certified history of mental health issues. Because of this, he was able to purchase

the weapons and ammunition without any trouble or suspicion.

These details reveal that Crimo came within a hair's breadth of unleashing another wave of terror in a nearby, highly populated city on the same day. Many more people could have been killed both in Highland Park and in Madison were it not for a lack of research on Crimo's part.

Despite murky motives reported by the media—including the alleged notion that he was "obsessed" with the numbers four and seven—the awareness by the police of Crimo's issues and their inability to capture him before fleeing showcase a staggering unpreparedness and unwillingness to protect the population at large. This recalls the recent massacre in Uvalde, Texas, where police stood in a hallway for 90 minutes as a gunman carried out a rampage in Robb Elementary, killing 19 students and two teachers.

Similarly, prominent Democrats have been shown to be totally incapable of speaking to the deep social crisis which pervades American society and gives rise to horrific mass killings with increasing regularity.

Less than 36 hours after the shooting, Vice President Kamala Harris spoke at the scene of the shooting with characteristically vague and rambling remarks. The extent to which Harris proved completely incapable of even attempting to offer solutions and analysis of the tragedy can be seen in the exact words she used:

We got to take this stuff seriously, as seriously as you are because you have been forced to take it seriously. The whole nation should understand and have a level of empathy to understand that this could happen anywhere in any peace-loving community, and we should stand together and speak out about why it has to stop.

In light of President Joe Biden not visiting the city and waffling on whether he ever will, Harris sent condolences on his behalf to the city's residents. In offering the usual sweet nothings Democrats proclaim in the light of tragedies such as this and the Uvalde shooting, Harris blandly stated: "You know that you have a whole nation that cares deeply about you and

stands with you. This is an incredibly tight community. I know that. And this person will be brought to justice, but it's not going to undo what happened. And we're here for you, and we stand with you."

Harris is first in the order of succession to the American presidency and the most she can do for the residents of Highland Park in the midst of such unspeakable violence is offer crocodile tears and metaphorical solidarity of the most useless kind.

Meanwhile, Illinois' Democratic Governor J.B. Pritzker parroted Harris' ineffectual call for an assault weapons ban and said: "There are no words for the kind of monster who lies in wait and fires into a crowd of families with children celebrating a holiday with their community. There are no words for the kind of evil that robs our neighbors of their hopes, their dreams, their futures. There are no words I can offer to lift the pain of those they leave behind. Please know that our state grieves with you, that M.K. and I grieve with you."

The Democrats claim to be the best chance in fighting the inexorable torrent of fascism spewing from the Republican Party. And the best they can offer to millions of Americans living in fear of unchecked violence and the rapid rescinding of democratic rights is "shared grief" and hollow invocations of "evil."

As the oldest capitalist party in the world, the Democrats are totally and completely unable to speak to the social, economic and political crisis confronting the working class in the US and internationally, which has been dramatically amplified over the last two years by the COVID-19 pandemic and the US-NATO war against Russia. They speak for a ruling class that has destroyed entire societies in wars of aggression while eagerly sacrificing the lives of workers at home for the profits of Wall Street and the billionaires.



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