

The Slaughter in Norway

Exclusive: A right-wing Christian fundamentalist has reportedly taken credit for the terrorist slaughter of scores of people in Norway on Friday. The alleged perpetrators' stated goal was to spark a Christian war against Muslims, a reaction to what he saw as a growing multiculturalism, an echo of Christian Right extremism elsewhere, notes Robert Parry.

By Robert Parry

July 24, 2011

News that a Christian extremist has taken credit for the terror attacks in Norway, including the systematic slaying of scores of youth at a summer camp, may be shocking but it shouldn't be surprising.

Over the past decade, the Christian Right and many Jewish neoconservatives have pushed the propaganda theme that Islam is a uniquely violent monotheistic religion that requires special suppression if the West is to avoid having Sharia law imposed on everyone.

Of course, in making that argument, one has to wonder if these Christian/Jewish zealots have ever read the Hebrew Torah or studied the history of Christianity.

The obvious truth is that the Torah (or Old Testament) is filled with story after story of ancient Israelites striking down their enemies with ruthless force and without remorse. Christianity, at least since its merger with the Roman Empire early in the Fourth Century, has been the world's preeminent violent religion bathed in blood and steeped in hypocrisy.

It is certainly true that radical Muslims have misused the teachings of Islam to justify horrendous slaughter of innocents, with al-Qaeda's 9/11 attacks as standing as the most outrageous example. There also have been cases over the centuries of Islamic armies acting in barbaric ways.

But those atrocities have nothing over the genocides and the massacres committed by Christian armies and Christian zealots.

When the First Crusade captured Jerusalem in 1099, the crusaders slaughtered both Muslims and Jews, leaving parts of the Holy City awash in Muslim blood. When Jews sought refuge in a synagogue, it was burned over their heads killing everyone inside as Crusaders sang songs praising Jesus.

Divisions within Christianity itself set off centuries of killing across Europe, with defenders of the Roman Catholic faith devising new and ingenious ways to

torture supposed “heretics” and with European explorers carrying their righteous Christian violence across the Atlantic Ocean to where Bible-toting Christians inflicted more centuries of genocide against the native populations.

In more modern times, the anti-Semitism of some Christians, including leaders of the Catholic Church and some Protestant sects, set the stage for the Nazi Holocaust of European Jews during World War II. After the war, Jewish refugees formed Israel as a “Jewish state” and immediately began persecuting and killing Arabs whose ancestors had lived in Palestine for centuries.

During the Cold War, Christian leaders justified widespread “death squad” operations to eradicate both “godless commies” and their sympathizers, including liberal clerics known as “liberation theologians.”

Christian/Jewish-tinged violence has continued into the new millennium with anti-Islamic sentiments an underlying factor in George W. Bush’s “war on terror,” which included the occupation of Afghanistan and the unprovoked invasion of Iraq, always somehow justified by the glories of Jesus Christ or the teachings of the Torah.

In fall 2002, Bush and his team created the propaganda framework for attacking Iraq, then took the Christmas season off in honor of the Prince of Peace, before revving the war machine back up for the March 19, 2003, attack.

That sort of hypocrisy praising Jesus for his commitment to non-violence while using the religion he inspired as a way to justify mass murder has been central to the history of Christianity.

So, who can be truly surprised that a Norwegian man, identified as 32-year-old Anders Behring Breivik, a right-wing fundamentalist Christian, has reportedly admitted to his role in the Oslo terror attacks on Friday?

According to press reports, acquaintances describe Breivik as a gun-loving Norwegian obsessed with what he saw as the threats of multiculturalism and Muslim immigration.

Though not admitting criminal guilt, Breivik explained his actions in a detailed manifesto calling for a Christian war to defend Europe against the threat of Muslim domination.

The attacks on Friday included a bombing in central Oslo and then the shooting of young people at a camp sponsored by Norway’s ruling Labor Party.

[For more on these topics, see Robert Parry’s *Secrecy & Privilege* and *Neck Deep*, now available in a two-book set for the discount price of only \$19. For

details, [click here.](#)]

Robert Parry broke many of the Iran-Contra stories in the 1980s for the Associated Press and Newsweek. His latest book, *Neck Deep: The Disastrous Presidency of George W. Bush*, was written with two of his sons, Sam and Nat, and can be ordered at neckdeepbook.com. His two previous books, *Secrecy & Privilege: The Rise of the Bush Dynasty from Watergate to Iraq* and *Lost History: Contras, Cocaine, the Press & 'Project Truth'* are also available there.
