



## VOXPOP

Here's how 2,157 readers responded to:  
Do you think political attack ads are effective?

## TODAY'S QUESTION: Should Miikka Kiprusoff retire?

To vote go to [calgaryherald.com/opinion](http://calgaryherald.com/opinion)

### Profound sickness

Re: "Bombs intended for maximum carnage," April 17.  
What type of sickness produced this violence? Anger, hatred or a psychopathic act of revenge? The horror of this event should make us more determined to build a safer and stronger western world.

Our hearts go out to the marathon runners who cannot again run with the same fervour. Our hearts go out to the families whose loved ones will never experience the rest of their lives or must live on with physical disabilities.

People on site, when the bombs went off, were shell-shocked. Many Bostonians and others, without concern for their own lives, helped those suffering and in pain, once again proving Americans' selflessness when needed.

We are all saddened by the senselessness of this destructive, despicable act of terror. The perpetrator will be found, but will there ever be an end to this violence? Or is it now eternal warfare?

Marlene Stobbart, High River

### No justification

Re: "RCMP unfairly maligned over investigations," Tom Christie, Opinion, April 17.

If RCMP officer Tom Christie thought he was bolstering the RCMP's reputation, he is sadly mistaken. His column is filled with alarming statements. He justifies the Nova Scotia RCMP's 10-month delay in interviewing the boys accused of having raped Rehtaeh Parsons by saying: "Is the public aware of the three-page document that must be read and explained to them?"

Seriously, reading a three-page document to a suspect is enough to stop the RCMP from investigating a serious crime? Then, Christie admits that if he were at the Vancouver airport and met with Robert Dziekanski, he might have done the same thing as the four officers who ended up killing the poor man?

Licia Corbella's column hit the nail on the head. The community policing component of the RCMP is broken. Shame on the Nova Scotia RCMP. Shame on Christie for justifying their inaction.

N.G. Norman, Edmonton

### More resources needed

Tom Christie, you have written a very difficult and no doubt painful rebuttal. You have done the RCMP, yourself and the general public well in expressing yourself in a clear, respectful and educated manner.

You have touched on difficult situations and accusations in a very positive, respectful, dignified and democratic manner without maligning Licia Corbella. I am sure, in her heart, she believed all she originally wrote. I read her column.

The insight you have given the public in relation to the legal and budgetary restrictions the RCMP are forced to work under should be food for thought for all of our national politicians, government officials and general public.

Like you, I believe the vast majority of RCMP officers and their leadership are caring and empathetic citizens, as well as being police officers.

Our national police force is working under extreme restrictions while being expected to solve all the problems and issues they are faced with. We, as a nation of mostly caring people, need to put political pressure on our government to give more support and resources to our national police force. Well done, Mr. Christie!

Terry Ferster, Red Deer

### Step up, parents

Re: "You can't fight crime with pink shirts," Naomi Lakritz, Opinion, April 16.

Naomi Lakritz is right on with her comments. I have helped raise three children. They are all adults now, having children of their own, and I am honestly very worried for my grandchildren growing up in a world where parents no longer take responsibility for their children and let the little darlings do whatever they want.

A spanking in love goes a very long way, especially when you really only need to do it once or twice in the entire early life of a child because the child learns very quickly where the line in the sand is.

Are parents nowadays so stupid that they actually think letting their children have everything they want



Stan Honda/AFP/Getty Images

Joy Liu places items at a memorial site at Boston University on Wednesday to honour Lu Lingzi, 23, a graduate student who was killed in the Boston Marathon bombings. Reader says Halifax should help Boston now, in return for Boston's help during Halifax's 1917 disaster.

## Halifax to Boston — let us return the gesture of compassion

Re: "Bombs intended for maximum carnage," April 17.

On Dec. 6, 1917, the city of Halifax was levelled by a massive explosion that killed 2,000 instantly, critically injured 10,000, and left 25,000 people without adequate housing during the blizzard that hit later that night.

Within hours of this explosion, the city of Boston had a freight train loaded with doctors, first responders and every emergency supply you can imagine on its way to Halifax. The final death toll would have been much higher, and the dead-of-winter rebuilding would have taken much longer without

the kind assistance and compassion bestowed on us by the good people of Boston.

As a transplanted Haligonian, I feel that I and the rest of Halifax owe Boston a debt we can never repay. But I would like to try. Where can I send donations?

Eric Gravelle, Calgary

### Backfiring

Re: "Do you think political attack ads are effective?" Vox Pop, April 17.

Yes! They lower my regard for the party making the attack.

Rosalyn Schmidt, Calgary

current government, who will not even let their own MPs speak their minds in public. This is not democracy.

Ronald Dunbar, Calgary

### Admirable

Justin Trudeau's decision not to engage in gutter politics and lower himself to the level of Stephen Harper's Conservatives is the admirable quality of a gentleman.

Surely, in a relatively civilized country like Canada, we do not have to tolerate the bullying of the party in power's nasty, slanderous American-style attack ads.

We all know that Harper's dictatorial, secretive, controlling style is a mirror image of the nasty attack ads of American politics.

A gentleman who respects Canadians would be a pleasant change from the

### Underdog may win

Poor Stephen Harper is committing political suicide by unleashing attack ads on the new leader of the Liberal party.

Harper should back off and allow Justin Trudeau's lack of political experience to be his undoing. However, by unleashing the hounds, many Canadians who tend to support the underdog being attacked by the bully, will no doubt feel sympathetic to Trudeau (especially young voters).

So, beware Mr. Harper, and please remember, "The meek shall inherit the Earth."

J.D. Round, Calgary

### Truth to tell

Of course attack ads are bullying. Because the truth hurts.

Butch Skulsky, Calgary

### Help Tom, too

Attack the ads! Bystanders, stand up to bullying and stop Steve from bullying Justin! With all the bullying tragedies that have been reported, and Steve's claim to be appalled and sickened by bullying, he himself has become our country's political bully.

Support Justin and let Steve know that you won't stand for his Conservative bullying anymore. By the way, Tom may need your support, too.

Larry Howe, Calgary

### Unappealing work

Re: "Workers needed," Letter, April 15.

Although I can respect and understand the viewpoint of Garth Whyte, president and CEO of the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association, regarding the industry's support for temporary foreign workers, I tend to disagree with the industry's motives. The small fee that is required versus paying their employees an attractive, competitive salary compared to other industries is minuscule.

I have been in the industry for over 40 years, and have seen it go from being a respectable, good-paying profession with benefits, to abusive, minimum wage salaries, tip sharing and where employees must sign a "no overtime pay contract."

Many of these fast food chains are also paying their temporary foreign workers below minimum wage to increase their profits.

Twenty years ago, I made \$1,500 more a month than I do today with zero benefits, and incompetent managers.

Most of the workers are not even allowed full-time hours, so that the owners don't have to pay the benefits.

If Whyte were truly committed to employees, his group would increase the salaries and benefits, improve the work conditions and then maybe Canadians would return to the food industry.

Cal Oatway, Calgary

## Thatcher embodied what it is to be a liberated woman



PAULA ARAB

Much has been made about the late Margaret Thatcher being neither feminist nor friend of women. I beg to differ. And I trust that my feminist sisters who disagree, will support my right to have an independent thought for myself.

Unfortunately, the argument has been hijacked by the Marxist branch of feminism — the belief that capitalism and private property are to blame for the oppression of women. In that context, no wonder the baroness refused to label herself a feminist, having fought communism her whole life.

"Margaret Thatcher was no feminist," shouts the left-leaning *The Guardian*. "One woman's success does not mean a step forward for women," writes columnist

Hadley Freeman.

It was a giant leap. Thatcher was no ordinary woman and her success was extraordinary, both at home and on the world stage. Her trail-blazing threw open the doors to Westminster, with the number of women elected to the British Parliament skyrocketing after Thatcher became Britain's first and only female prime minister — and the longest serving one of the 20th century.

Nineteen women were elected to Parliament when Thatcher became prime minister in 1979. It doubled eight years later, and increased six-fold to 120 by 1997, seven years after Thatcher left office. More women were elected in that historic election than all previous elections in total.

Some Labour supporters will claim sole credit, since a vast swath were elected to their party. Not Labour MP Gisele Stuart, who was refreshingly honest in her tribute to Thatcher last week when Parliament reconvened for the occasion.

"I think that this House and the other House, will

probably miss Baroness Thatcher for longer than any other woman who has served in this place," said Stuart.

How true if the response to her death is any indication. Thatcher's funeral Wednesday marked the end of 10 days of international tributes and intense media coverage around the globe. What other politician in the world could get anywhere near that many inches of press?

"As the prime minister, Margaret Thatcher broke through that glass ceiling," said Stuart. "She kicked doors open. Indeed, she kicked doors open for Labour women, in a way that they perhaps did not entirely appreciate, because the trade unions (before reforms) had an enormously powerful role in candidate selections."

Fellow Labour MP Glenda Jackson wasn't so gracious. With bitter vitriol, an angry Jackson castigated Thatcher posthumously and attacked her womanhood.

"To pay tribute to the first prime minister deputed by

female gender, OK, but a woman, not on my terms," Jackson spat at Parliament.

Feminism, though, is about liberating women of society's expectation — and of the arrogant dictation from people like Jackson — of what it means to be a woman. Some feminists go so far as to say that society is the greatest enemy of women, belying the criticism of Thatcher's much-maligned and misrepresented speech that there is no society, only individual men and women. From a feminist perspective, how deeply profound? Those who criticize Thatcher for behaving like a man are no more enlightened than those with dated misogynist views who say women must get married and have children to have value in their community.

Simone de Beauvoir, the mother of modern feminism, also denied the Marxist view that a woman's identity is defined by economics. She shifted the discussion from equal rights, to freedom, the spreading of which — through the defeat of communism — was

likely Thatcher's greatest legacy.

In her seminal book, *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir said women couldn't be equal, until they were free to define themselves for themselves, and change their conditions.

Thatcher, a grocer's daughter, understood this well. She wasn't striving to be "equal" to men, or to behave as women back then were expected. Had she done either, she would never have become prime minister. She had to be better, much better, to get elected, win respect and be accepted by the patriarchal all-boys club of the 1980s Tory party. A tough, exceptionally strong leader was what was demanded by the times. Thatcher worked infinitely harder than the men in her cabinet, and was often better versed on their portfolios than they were themselves.

She didn't appoint token MPs to her cabinet because, as the left well knows, she didn't believe in hand-outs. You had to earn your way there. And in 1979, Thatcher had a talent pool

of just seven female MPs in a caucus of 339. That rose to 12 in 1983, and 16 in 1987, or four per cent of her caucus. One baroness was qualified, and she was promoted to first female leader of the House of Lords in 1981, and later a cabinet minister. As more talented women were elected as Tories, Thatcher promoted them too. MPs Virginia Bottomley and Gillian Shephard, elected in the mid 1980s, worked their way up in Thatcher's later governments, and became cabinet ministers under her successor, John Major.

Thatcher liberated herself to the point that being a woman was simply a non-issue. That's the ultimate goal of feminism. Gender doesn't make a great leader, any more than race, colour or creed. In the words of the Iron Lady herself: "Being powerful is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren't."

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