



# Boston: The Day After

BY KATHLEEN PARKER  
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WASHINGTON — You know the feeling. You wake up filled with dread but, still groggy, you can't put your finger on the reason.

Possibilities flitter across the landscape of near-consciousness: An exam? A deadline? A speech? What day is it?

Oh my God, Boston.

For longer than usual, you linger, head on pillow, breathing, thinking, I have my legs. Oh my God.

Coffee.

"Boston will survive," someone is saying on TV. The papers lead as expected. Drudge, Lucianne, Beast, HuffPo, Twitter. Two brothers each lost a leg. Horror.

Breathe.

And then, the worst thing happens. You get a grip. You speak to the neighbor. The workers arrive to fix the garden wall. The dog needs walking.

Life, as a matter of fact, goes on. But guilt nags. Isn't it too soon to move along? You feel guilty for not suffering more on behalf of those who are suffering so acutely and so unimaginably. That man in the wheelchair — the runner with only a jagged bone where his leg used to be — will haunt happy moments forever.

Here we go.

From this point forward, everything that follows is now familiar: The soundtrack, the speculation, the newsy reminders that we don't know anything yet but we'll keep talking anyway, and what would we have newscasters do, really? Don't we want to know as soon as there is something to know?

Everyone professes their love for Boston. We love the Red Sox and Patriots' Day, Copley Square and Quincy Market. Those wonderful accents. Those tough citizens. All those smart people, their coffee shops and lobster rolls. Our Athens, somebody says.

How dare they? Those others, whoever they are. *Someone's at the door.*

Breaking: Mediaite has put together a "worst media reactions" list that makes us glad we don't tweet. Commentators, feeling they must say something, said much that they shouldn't have. The day "I" went to Fenway Park. It's those right-wing gun nuts. Clearly a Muslim. Round 'em up. Blame the gays. *Where's Bush?*

President Obama, cool cat that he is, does and says nothing to damage his reputation. He's on it. Justice will be done. Make no mistake.



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More security, more intel, that's what's needed. Sure. More cameras, more spot checks, longer lines. The gift of terror isn't fear; it's loss of freedom. We are unafraid. *Be very afraid.*

"We want you to be vigilant," says a stern official. "We do have a threat ... but we want you to go about your business." OK.

But who did it? The Taliban in Pakistan says, "Not us." Would the real terrorist please stand up?

Black helicopter alert: Did someone really ask Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick whether the bombings were a "false flag" so government could take away our guns?

"No," deadpans Patrick. "Next question?"

A radio jock says, "Something's very fishy." A badly burned Saudi student is a "person of interest." Ban marathons, quips a poster (posts a quipster?) on National Review Online. Too many high-capacity runners. No race needs more than seven runners.

The jokes begin, not because anyone thinks anything is funny. Dark humor helps us breathe when reality is too terrible. *Is it too soon to say unpleasant things about Roger Ebert? Margaret Thatcher wouldn't mind.*

"We have to be right all the time," says Tom Ridge, former head of Homeland Security. Only police states get things "right" all the time. How do you screen 27,000 backpacks? You don't.

Tagg Romney is talking. Huh? Oh, his office is near the bomb site. Got it. A doctor says many people lost their legs. So many acts of heroism. One doc ran the marathon, then went to work.

Parents of children from Newtown were among spectators watching the race, the last mile of which was dedicated to the 20 children and six adults who were killed by another maniac.

And now a word from our sponsors.

The psychic brutality of such events, whether an elementary school shooting or a bombing at the finish line of a marathon on a glorious spring day, is singularly too much. Cumulatively, they have a killing effect on the human soul. We can say all the right things and hug our children more tightly. We can make pronouncements and promises. But the deep, mortal wound of man's inhumanity to man continues to be unfathomable.

The challenge isn't only to prevent the next act of terror. It is to avoid becoming accustomed to the horror.

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# Where Democracy Doesn't Work

BY ROBERT B. REICH  
Tribune Media Services

Who says American politics is gridlocked? A tidal wave of politicians from both sides of the aisle who just a few years ago opposed same-sex marriage are now coming around to support it.

Elected officials who had been against allowing undocumented immigrants to become American citizens now want to "chart a path" for them.

Even those who were staunch gun advocates are now sounding more reasonable about background checks.

It's nice to think logic and reason are finally catching up with our elected representatives, but the real explanation for these changes of heart is more prosaic: public opinion.

Polls show greater support for marriage equality than ever before, with 58 percent of Americans in favor and 36 percent opposed, according to a recent Washington Post-ABC News survey. Several recent polls show that about 70 percent of Americans believe there should be a way for people in the United States illegally to remain in this country if they meet certain requirements. And polls show that about 90 percent of Americans support universal background checks of those purchasing a gun.

The exception is in the economic sphere, where public opinion seems beside the point.

Before January's fiscal cliff deal, for example, at least 60 percent of Americans expressed strong support for raising taxes on incomes over \$250,000. But the deal locked in the Bush tax cut for everyone earning up to \$400,000.

Polls also show Americans would prefer that taxes be raised to reduce the budget deficit rather than have future Medicare or Social Security benefits cut. Yet the president has offered to cut future benefits.

Legislative deals require compromise. But why is it that deals over economic policy almost always compromise away what a majority of Americans want?

Some 65 percent of Americans want to raise taxes on large corporations. But both parties are heading in precisely the opposite direction. According to a Rasmussen Reports poll, half of Americans favor a plan to break up Wall Street's 12 megabanks, which currently control 69 percent of the banking industry. Only 23 percent oppose such a plan. But our elected representatives won't even consider it.

Our politicians are sensitive to public opinion on equal-marriage rights, immigration and guns. Why are they tone-deaf to what most Americans want on the economy?

Because marriage rights, immigration and guns don't threaten big money in America. By contrast, any tinker-



Robert REICH

ing with taxes or regulations sets off alarm bells in our nation's finely appointed dining rooms and boardrooms — alarm bells that, in turn, set off promises of (or threats to withhold) large wads of campaign cash in the next election.

When political scientists Benjamin Page and Larry Bartels recently surveyed Chicagoans with an average net worth of \$14 million, they found their biggest concern was curbing budget deficits and government spending — ranking these as priorities three times as often as they did unemployment.

And — no surprise — these wealthy individuals were also far less willing than other Americans to curb deficits by raising taxes on high-income people, and more willing to cut Social Security and Medicare. They also opposed initiatives most other Americans favor — such as increasing spending on schools and raising the minimum wage above the poverty level.

The other thing distinguishing Page and Bartels' wealthy respondents from the rest of America was their political influence.

Two-thirds of them had contributed money (averaging \$4,633) in the most recent presidential election. A fifth of them had even "bundled" contributions from others.

That money bought the kind of political access most Americans only dream of. About half of these wealthy people had recently initiated contact with a U.S. senator or representative, according to Page and Bartels — and nearly half (44 percent) of those contacts concerned matters of relatively narrow economic self-interest rather than broader national concerns.

This is just the wealthy of one city — Chicago. Multiply it across the entire United States and you begin to see the larger picture of whom our representatives are listening to, and why. Nor does the survey by Page and Bartels include the institutionalized wealth — and economic clout — of Wall Street and large corporations. Multiply the multiplier.

When it comes to issues such as same-sex marriage, undocumented immigrants and guns, our democracy seems to be working. It's far from perfect, of course. Certain special-interest groups like the NRA still have outsized influence.

But when it comes to economic issues that might affect the fates of large fortunes, American democracy isn't functioning at all. Big money talks, and it's speaking more loudly now than ever.

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## OPINION | OUR VIEW

# Boston Bombing: We Can't Run Away

Perhaps there is something both ironic and appropriate in the fact that Monday's explosions in Boston happened at a marathon race.

The scene would suggest — amid ghastly, wounded howls and a whirlwind of blood and bone — that there really is no running away from the faceless, unpredictable evil that lurks in the world.

This time, evil showed itself at the Boston Marathon, probably the most famous such race in the world. The marathon is the celebratory centerpiece of the Massachusetts holiday of Patriots Day, which commemorates the first shots fired at Lexington and Concord in 1775, volleys that ignited the American Revolution. That's all background fodder that was, ever so briefly, rendered irrelevant by at least two explosions Monday that, as of this writing, killed three people and wounded more than 170.

It was an unthinkable act that now has us thinking.

We think about all the evil that slithers in the shadows and waits to strike us anywhere and at any time. It's an automatic action on our part, a purely human reflex born of fear.

We think of how we must defend ourselves.

We think about what could happen — wherever and whenever that might be. Maybe incidents such as the Boston bombings make us think too much. And in that mindset, there lies another kind of trouble.

We don't know all the facts about Monday's incident. Notably, government officials were being very careful with the wording they use to address the situation. They were hesitant to use words like "attack" or "terrorism," even though those prospects were openly speculated and privately assumed. Certainly, it was "terrorism," in terms of generating terror and creating chaos. But the word bears certain connotations, particularly in this post-9/11 age, that are too easy to leap to, and we would be wise to avoid going to such places until more facts are known.

In the meantime, Monday's incident must steel our resolve.

The blunt truth is there are always security dangers at major events like the Boston Marathon — and, for that matter, the Super Bowl, the Academy Awards, a concert, Riverboat Days or any place where many innocent people are likely to congregate. And despite increased security measures that simply cannot anticipate the unthinkable in every situation, we always will be targets.

The only way we can really fight back is to not allow such acts of violence to deter us from living our lives. If this turns out to be classified as an act of terror, its intent was to frighten us. And that is no way to live.

If this is terrorism, it can only triumph by making us live in shuddering dread. To persevere, we must instead live life on our terms.

There is a lot of investigative work to be done in the Boston incident, and there are many mysteries that must be unraveled. But finding those answers won't be the only victory we must seek in the aftermath of the Boston bombings. Instead, the ultimate triumph for us will come a year from now, when more than 20,000 people take part in the 2014 Boston Marathon as part of a testament of strength. You can count on that.

Yes, we can run away from such tragedy by becoming disengaged and living under the fist of fear. Or we can stand our ground. The latter is what they will do in Boston. That's what they did in New York City, in Washington, in Pennsylvania, in Oklahoma City and wherever else the agents of terror — whether they were foreign or domestic — have always believed they could achieve a victory. We must stand our ground yet again and remind them how dreadfully wrong they are.

kmh

## TODAY IN HISTORY

### By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, April 17, the 107th day of 2013. There are 258 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:** On April 17, 1961, some 1,500 CIA-trained Cuban exiles launched the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in an attempt to topple Fidel Castro, whose forces crushed the incursion by the third day.

**On this date:** In 1492, a contract was signed by Christopher Columbus and a representative of Spain's King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, giving Columbus a commission to seek a westward ocean passage to Asia.

In 1521, Martin Luther went before the Diet of Worms to face charges stemming from his religious writings. (He was later declared an outlaw by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.)

In 1861, the Virginia State Convention voted to secede from the Union.

In 1895, the Treaty of Shimonoseki ended the first Sino-Japanese War.

In 1937, the animated cartoon character Daffy Duck made his debut in the Warner Bros. cartoon "Porky's Duck Hunt," directed by Tex Avery.

In 1941, Yugoslavia surrendered to Germany during World War II.

In 1969, a jury in Los Angeles convicted Sirhan Sirhan of assassinating Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. The First Secretary of Czechoslovakia's Communist Party, Alexander Dubcek, was deposed.

In 1970, Apollo 13 astronauts James A. Lovell, Fred W. Haise and Jack Swigert splashed down safely in the Pacific, four days after a ruptured oxygen tank crippled their spacecraft while en route to the moon.

In 1973, Federal Express (later FedEx) began operations as 14 planes carrying 186 packages took off from Memphis International Airport, bound for 25 U.S. cities.

In 1986, at London's Heathrow Airport, a bomb was discovered in the bag of a pregnant Irishwoman about to board an El Al jetliner to Israel; she'd been tricked into carrying the bomb by her Jordanian fiancé.

In 1993, a federal jury in Los Angeles convicted two former police officers of violating the civil rights of beaten motorist Rodney King; two other officers were acquitted. Turkish President Turgut Ozal died at age 66.

In 1997, former Israeli president Chaim Herzog died in Tel Aviv at age 78.

**Ten years ago:** U.S. special forces in Baghdad captured Barzan Ibrahim Hasan, a half-brother of and adviser to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. The U.S. government awarded Bechtel Corp. a major contract for helping rebuild Iraq's power, water and sewage systems. Diet doctor Robert C. Atkins died in New York at age 72. Songwriter Earl King died in New Orleans at age 69. Sir J. Paul Getty Jr., the reclusive third son of American oilman J. Paul Getty, died in London at age 70.

**Five years ago:** Pope Benedict XVI, during his visit to Washington, talked and prayed privately with survivors of the clergy sex abuse scandal in what's believed to be a first-ever meeting between a pontiff and abuse victims. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown met at Camp David with President George W. Bush; the two leaders sought to dispel doubts about their relationship, showing common ground on a range of issues. Danny Federici, the keyboard player for Bruce Springsteen, died in New York City at age 58.

**One year ago:** Riding on the back of a 747 jet, retired space shuttle Discovery traveled from Cape Canaveral, Fla., to Chantilly, Va., to be installed in its new home — the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum annex near Washington Dulles Airport in Northern Virginia. Jamie Moyer, at age 49, became the oldest pitcher to ever win a major league contest as the Colorado Rockies beat the San Diego Padres 5-3.

**Today's Birthdays:** Composer-musician Jan Hammer is 65. Actress Olivia Hussey is 62. Actor Clarke Peters is 61. Rock singer-musician Pete Shelley (Buzcocks) is 58. Actor Sean Bean is 54. Actor Joel Murray is 51. Rock singer Maynard James Keenan is 49. Actress Lela Rochon is 49. Actor William Mapother is 48. Actress Leslie Bega is 46. Actress Kimberly Elise is 46. Singer Liz Phair is 46. Rapper-actor Redman is 43. Actress Jennifer Garner is 41. Country musician Craig Anderson (Heartland) is 40. Singer Victoria Adams Beckham is 39. Actress-singer Lindsay Korman is 35. Actress Rooney Mara is 28. Actress Jacqueline MacInnes Wood is 26. Figure skater Mirai Nagasu is 20. Actor Paulie Litt is 18. Actress Dee Dee Davis is 17.

**Thought for Today:** "A happiness that is sought for ourselves alone can never be found; for a happiness that is diminished by being shared is not big enough to make us happy." — Thomas Merton, American poet and author (1915-1968).

## FROM THE BIBLE

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. 1 John 1:9. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

## YOUR LETTERS

### Bingo Night Thanks

**Lincoln Elementary PTA**  
Lincoln Elementary PTA held its annual Family Bingo Night on March 7 in the gym. The gym was packed with students and their families, and everyone seemed to have a great time.

The PTA would like to extend a sincere thank you to each person or business that helped to make the event a success. Many PTA members helped with the event

through planning, set up, clean up, shopping for prizes and snacks, and working the event. The following businesses donated prizes: Bonanza, Burger King, Dairy Queen, McDonalds and Pizza Ranch. Carmike Cinemas donated popcorn as part of the offered snacks. The gracious activities staff and residents at Avera Yankton Care Center once again lent us their Bingo supplies.

We couldn't have such a fun event without your help.

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