

· EDITORIAL ·

Trudeau's staff failed him

The private, mid-December meeting between Justin Trudeau and recently-freed hostage Joshua Boyle should never have happened.

As Canada's prime minister, Trudeau is famous for being accessible to ordinary Canadians and may have thought he was showing kindness to Boyle and Boyle's family, who had been held captive for years by terrorists in Pakistan. But as someone who was at the time likely under investigation by police in connection with serious allegations and whose past raised enough red flags to make a crimson forest, Boyle should have never been allowed into Trudeau's office in Ottawa.

While some critics say Trudeau showed poor judgment in this get-together, the real blame lies with his staff. The failure by the Prime Minister's Office to identify a potential security risk to Trudeau was a disservice to him and an insult to Canadians. His advisers weren't merely asleep at the wheel. They were comatose.

On New Year's Day, just two weeks after that Dec. 18 meeting, Boyle was in court in Ottawa facing 15 criminal charges that include sexual assault, assault and forcible confinement. Considering the charges relate to events that allegedly occurred between Oct. 14 and Dec. 30 last year, it seems improbable the police investigation into Boyle wasn't going on when Boyle, his wife and three children were having their pictures taken with Trudeau.

If the investigation was underway, the RCMP officers who provide security for Trudeau should have known about it and forbidden the meeting. It is, to put it kindly, inappropriate for Trudeau, Canada's top lawmaker, to meet privately with someone being investigated in response to serious allegations. But even if the police probe had not yet begun or if the PMO didn't know about it, Trudeau's staff should have had the wits to know there are enough murky chapters in Joshua Boyle's story to bar him from a private sit-down with the prime minister.

Boyle was briefly married to Zaynab Khadr, daughter of jihadist Ahmed Said Khadr, who died in a gun battle with Pakistani forces and who, before his death, enrolled his son Omar Khadr in a terrorist training camp.

With his second wife, Caitlin Coleman, who was pregnant at the time, and for reasons that remain unclear, Joshua Boyle entered a dangerous region of Afghanistan in 2012 on a backpacking trip.

He says he was a "pilgrim" who was bringing aid to hard-pressed Afghan villagers, though what that help involved is also unclear.

U.S. intelligence sources have said they suspect Boyle might have been trying to link up with extremists.

In any event, Boyle and his wife were captured by the Taliban-linked Haqqani network and held hostage, mainly in Pakistan, before being freed by Pakistani forces last October.

It is unnecessary to reach rash conclusions about Boyle's agenda or his politics to realize he is an unknown and possibly dangerous individual who posed risks to Trudeau. In future, the prime minister's staff and advisers must do a better job guarding the door to the office of this country's leader.



ABOUT US



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· LETTERS & COMMENTARY ·

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Men harassment victims too

RE: Letter from Melinda Crawford concerning sexual harassment.

She is correct saying that women must wake up to this issue.

However, what about the sexual harassment of men by women?

I am fed up hearing about women who claim to have been harassed, but it is my opinion that women are just as bad as men when it comes to this matter.

I was harassed many times during my working life by women who would have made sex available if I wanted it.

These were women with whom I worked. In my job as a salesman I went away on overnight trips quite

often, and several women asked me to take them with me.

These were not the only situations, and I am sure other men were similarly harassed.

We never hear about these cases, we only hear about men harassing women.

It is time for men to wake up also, and make it clear to all that men are not the only offenders.

Terry Brown

If we went vegan we would eliminate E. coli

Dozens of people have

been sickened—and at least two have died—because of recent E. coli outbreaks in the United States and Canada.

Some health officials have been blaming romaine lettuce for the outbreaks, so many people may not realize that meat consumption is the root cause of the problem.

Plant-based foods don't naturally harbor E. coli bacteria. It lives in the intestinal tracts and feces of warm-blooded animals.

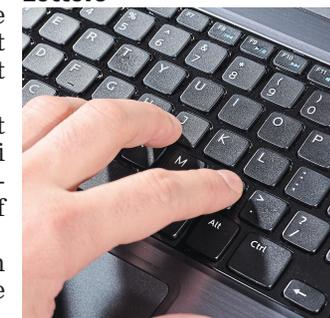
When cow or chicken manure is used to fertilize crops or leaks into waterways, fruits and vegetables can become contaminated. (Cross-contamination can also occur when produce is

placed on the same surface as meat, or when someone doesn't practice proper hygiene.)

When more people go vegan, fewer animals will be bred for food, lessening the threat of E. coli contamination.

Heather Moore,
The PETA Foundation

Letters



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