

# POLITICS AS USUAL

By Alison Collins-Mrakas

These aren't the droids you're looking for?move along?move along?

You know things have gone to the dark side when a CNN anchor starts quoting Star Wars to try to make sense of what's happening. (For those that don't get the Star Wars reference, it's a Jedi Mind Trick used by Obi Wan Kenobi for distraction. Seems apropos given the circumstances).

Indeed just what in the Samhain is happening? How do you make sense of it all?

Members of Trump's campaign team ? including his former Campaign Chair ? have been indicted. Let that sink in for a minute.

Trump's Campaign Chair has been arrested. So much for fake news?

In the midst of a nuclear crisis, a hurricane disaster, a failed health plan, stalling national budgets, potential withdrawal from NAFTA...if press reports are to be believed (and cue the folks who call all reputable media ?fake news?) the most powerful man in the world was not in urgent meetings regarding any of it, but was instead sitting in his residence until 12 noon watching TV and the breathless news coverage of the various indictments of members of his campaign team.

Watching TV.

Well, I guess I can kind of understand that because it does seem like reality is in fact a very badly written drama, replete with a few no name actors ? Papadopoulos?, and some very bad acting?Sarah Huckabee Sanders pronouncements that there's nothing to see and all is well, as a case in point.

It's been an extraordinary 24 hours in US political history. And as the days and weeks unfold there is sure to be even more drama ? good, bad and ugly ? to come. Despite the Trumpists protestations to the contrary, there is most definitely some there, there.

But for the rest of us who are not Americans, what if anything does it mean? Nothing? Or something more serious or sinister even? Our neighbours to the south have always done things their own way, so is this yet another instance where we can watch from a distance, assured of our self-righteous position of politically moral superiority? Can we be smug in our belief that we are nothing like the crazy

I think not, folks. While our media may not cover things to the same excruciatingly degree of detail as the American (and British) media do, and our political class is not subject to the same level of insane trolling that American politicians are, (To the best of my knowledge, Trudeau, Harper and the like don't have their own Roger Stone twittering away at them), that doesn't mean that we are pure as the driven snow.

Bribery scandals and quid pro quo. Deleted emails and smashed motherboards. Fake Facebook accounts and disinformation campaigns. Sound familiar?

Politics has always been rough and tumble, but it has gone from being coarse to being (allegedly) criminal. How and who are we supposed to have faith in our leaders when they seem hell bent on sticking it to the other guy rather than serving us?

I've made this point before, but as it is timely, I will make it again. Win at all costs is not governing. It is a zero sum game where everyone loses.