

## POLITICS AS USUAL: Stop the Inanity

By Alison Collins-Mrakas

Well it has been an interesting few weeks on the world political stage.

The G20, the failing Health Bill ? Trumpcare ? in the US, uprising in Venezuela, the tentative defeat of ISIS in Mosul. And then there is North Korea. There has been the terrifying nuclear weapons test by the North Koreans, a test of an apparently fully functioning ICBM with the potential to strike mainland USA.

Again, as with other announcements from the North Koreans about their nuclear weaponry, it is not immediately clear whether it is in fact true. However, all signs point to it being true this time. There is a real bomb attached to a real missile that can really hit North America.

That's terrifying. Arguably the world's most unstable leader now has weapons of mass destruction ? weapons that could hit North America ? at his stubby, twitchy fingertips. Whatever petty, manufactured grievance he may have with the US can now be acted upon with deadly force. The implications for us here in Canada cannot be understated.

It's not clear whether they could launch a bomb tomorrow, as many experts have noted that their capabilities are at least five years away, but they are that much closer to being able to do so.

The world has reacted with a range of responses all varying on a theme of condemnation. Canada ?denounces? the test. The UN Security Council ?condemns? the missile test. Following the July 4, successful test of an ICBM with a range of potentially 8000 km ? according to the Japanese ? an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council was held to discuss what action if any could be taken immediately to address these dangerous launches.

In response, the US and South Korea decided to demonstrate a show of force by conducting massive military ?exercises.? China and Russia condemned the North Koreans for the test and the Americans for the ?provocative? exercises.

And Trump? Well, he tweeted about it of course. It has been described as a ?mocking? tweet, Trump asked if Kim had ?nothing better to do?.

Hmmm. Well that sounds like a strong diplomatic response to a global crisis. Not sure provoking a clearly unhinged leader, who has ready access to nuclear weapons no less, is a smart move but no one has said that Trump's global political ?strategies? (if there are any), are smart.

But enough of the snark.

My point, in this somewhat rambling mid-summer column, is that there are more important things going on than the antics of Trump (or Trudeau's ?sock? diplomacy) that some journalists choose to focus on. Yes, Trump has been tweeting away like a madman on journalists' supposedly bleeding facelifts. And ?Beautiful health plans.? And fake news. And it is appalling.

But it isn't worthy of the extensive coverage it has generated. What is worthy of coverage? What is happening to the people of Venezuela? What concrete actions are world leaders taking to mitigate the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear sabre rattling? Given the raging wild fires in BC and California, what is the US and Canada doing to address the severe weather implications of climate change?

I am weary of the inane leading every newscast and newspaper headline. I think it's time we recognize that we should pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.