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Only 3.3 million people

by BRIAN LOCKHART

The ?tariff war' continues, although so far, it seems to be more of a skirmish.

There have been delays and timelines moved back, and so far, no real shots fired other than minor ones.

Although, it has produced some rather idiot comments from politicians ? especially from Florida, land of the ?Florida man was arrested. . .' articles.

US President Trump's announcements about tariffs are largely hot air.

I said from the beginning, you just can't decide to hammer certain industries with 25 per cent tariffs and not expect a massive response from lobby groups showing up at congresspeople's offices and descending on Capitol Hill demanding fair treatment.

There are American companies that rely on foreign products to operate. If you place a tariff on those products, the company must pass on the expense to customers. Many of those customers will simply decide a project is no longer valid due to the expense.

The same goes for consumer products. If you want to make someone angry, add 25 per cent to the cost of an already expensive refrigerator. A refrigerator isn't a luxury, it's a necessity.

On top of the mass firings that have taken place in US federal agencies and departments, you can't deliberately pass laws that will see people lose their jobs, and not expect a backlash.

I don't know why Trump has a beef with Canada and Mexico, but it seems to be almost on a personal level. I don't think he even knows how the real world operates outside of New York City.

The response from Ontario so far, doesn't seem to make a lot of sense.

It has just been announced that American products are being pulled off of LCBO shelves ? no Jack Daniels for you!

The only thing this will accomplish is to possibly have a couple of people in Tennessee being laid off from their jobs because of reduced sales.

If you want to boycott a product, it should be a personal choice, not decided for you by the government.

The provincial government has also cancelled the contract with StarLink because of Elon Musk's ties to Trump. What will that accomplish other than delaying high-speed internet to northern communities?

Some US politicians have come out against the tariffs.

Some Canadians are now boycotting the US South as a travel destination. That is their choice.

However, recent comments by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis seem to indicate Florida isn't worried. At least in DeSantis' opinion.

I guess DeSantis didn't have his ?stupid filter' working during his recent comments to lawmakers at the state capitol in Tallahassee.

Noting that around 3.3 million Canadians visit Florida every year, DeSantis said, ?That's not much of a boycott in my book,?

considering the total number of visitors to the state every year is around 142 million. He also went on to mock Canadian hockey teams for some reason.

What a dumb thing to say by the guy who runs a state where the main industry is tourism.

It's not much? Maybe it's a lot to the people who rent condos and hotel rooms to Canadian tourists. Maybe it's a lot to the restaurants and attractions that appreciate those 3.3 million tourists.

Did the state tourism board send a note to DeSantis to thank him for his comments? Did the local tourism boards who try to bring people to their towns thank him for mocking those tourists?

I would think Florida tourism cringed when they heard him make a stupid comment about the people who help keep their economy alive.

A real leader, at least one with half a brain, would have made a statement that despite the current tariff situation, Florida always welcomes and appreciates Canadian tourists who visit and spend a lot of money.

Instead, DeSantis got a standing ovation from the Florida lawmakers.

If people want to send a message by boycotting certain products, they should do so.

But having the decision made for you won't solve anything.

I hung the Maple Leaf on my garage on Flag Day on Feb. 15, to make a statement about Trump's ridiculous notion of trying to make us the 51st state. That's in addition to his equally ridiculous plan to take over Greenland.

The flag is still there and may stay there for a while unless this absurd rhetoric goes away.

I'm pretty sure the tariff situation will go away as the lobby groups representing companies and organizations that will lose money, put pressure on a naive Trump to change his thought process and get back to smart business.