

Let's eliminate all senseless deaths in the world!

MARK PAVILONS

More often than not, our species is reactionary.

Try as we may to be proactive, all too often we're picking up the pieces of ill conceived plans and policy decisions.

In society, we don't really notice an issue unless it's thrown in our faces. These same faces tend to be buried in our phones or smart devices.

We all know our world is messed up at times. Unless it affects us personally, we often ignore the nasty bits going on in the world.



Most of us are aware of the recent murder in New York that left eight dead and more than a dozen injured. It's been called a terror attack and the 29-year-old accused appears to support ISIS ideology.

U.S. law enforcement officers will be digging deep into this man's past and reasons behind the attack. Trump has called for the death penalty in this case, even though New York State does not have it.

I'm not sure what separates a mass murder from a terrorist act. Simply saying one supports ISIS ideology doesn't make them a terrorist. Those American-born mass murderers seldom have any reason for their shooting sprees. And we may never know for sure what motivated Stephen Paddock for killing 58 people in Las Vegas in the worst incident in U.S. history.

The reality is, many innocent civilians, police officers and military personnel are killed each and every day in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Pakistan, Turkey ...

The same day as the New York incident, 15 were killed in Charikar, Parwan, Afghanistan with the Taliban as suspects.

Suicide bombers and car bombs kill 30 here, 40 there and another 90 over there. This is commonplace, so much so, that some don't even make the evening news.

This is life for many in the Middle East.

In Africa, the Boko Haram is responsible for thousands of deaths. One instance alone Oct. 14 in Mogadishu, Somalia killed 358.

Another 23 were killed in that city on Oct. 28. Forty-three died in Kandahar, Afghanistan Oct. 18, and 70 the previous day in separate attacks.

There's no question that we're living in a terror-filled world. But is this anything new?

I believe that given the proliferation of smart phones and devices, news of such incidents is reaching more people around the world.

In fact, those very same terrorists, in some remote region, have access to the same technology, which they use to further their own cause.

When I see these incidents on the news it breaks my heart. I see city streets reduced to rubble. Men, women and children die every day. Men, women and children drive around in pickup trucks armed with machine guns, ready to kill every day.

Sources I came across say so far in 2017, 6,596 people were killed in 1,052 terror attacks.

Messed up doesn't even begin to describe the situation.

Aside from the intentional mass killings around the globe, tens of thousands, die every day from natural disasters, disease, starvation and preventable illness.

No, it's not fair. But such is life in developing nations.

About 29,000 children under the age of five ? 21 each minute ? die every day, mainly from preventable causes. More than 70 per cent of almost 11 million child deaths every year are attributable to six causes: diarrhoea, malaria, neonatal infection, pneumonia, preterm delivery, or lack of oxygen at birth.

Alarming?? You bet.

Heart disease and cancer combined kill more than 1.2 million people a year in the U.S.

Of the 56.4 million deaths worldwide in 2015, more than half (54%) were due to the top 10 causes. Ischaemic heart disease and stroke are the world's biggest killers, accounting for a combined 15 million deaths in 2015. These diseases have remained the leading causes of death globally in the last 15 years.

Again, this information is not new.

Humans have been waging the war against death since time began. We're losing.

And therein lies the dilemma. With all the resources we possess, even just here in Canada and the U.S., we could virtually wipe out almost all childhood deaths.

The cost of commonly used antimalarials (chloroquine, sulphadoxine-pyrimethamine) is only a few cents. The new and effective treatment, ACTs, cost \$2 to \$2.50 for an adult treatment dose.

The cost of 5.56 NATO ammo is roughly 23 cents per bullet or \$7 per 30-round magazine.

The U.S. Department of Defense funded more than \$76 billion of weapons, communication devices, and other security equipment to the Afghan security forces since 2002.

Hmmm, \$76 billion. I could be wrong, but wouldn't that amount cure every preventable illness in the world, with money left over to combat heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes?

I find this situation more frightening than any terror attack on domestic soil.

Every senseless death ??even those in daily car accidents ??is a waste. Every human being has so much potential.

Maybe I'm a dreamer, but I'd love to see an end to all pointless deaths on our planet.

One day, terrorism will be a thing of the past. Perhaps then we'll have to find something else to spend the money on!