

Martha's Monthly
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An old fox needs shooing from the chicken house.

Martha is not one to cheer for the top dog. In fact, she has a softness for the under dog. She really wanted Togo to win the World Cup. She felt sure Nader would make the best President. And she frequently buys rootbeer just to avoid Coke vs. Pepsi (two top dogs). So this week, when she felt a little tinge of gentleness towards Premier Klein, it struck her that he was no longer on top. She remembers feeling the same way when a pathetic & ill fox threatened her chickens. She felt a little sorry for the fox. She's been finding herself feeling a little sorry for Mr. Klein lately.

Premier Klein [announced last week](#) that he thought another round of prosperity bonuses were a fine way to spend the obscene surpluses. Klein seems to have gone on vacation a few months before he retires. It makes Martha a little sad to see a man so out of touch with his public, his province, and most importantly his caucus.

Perhaps the poor Premier was just trying to flex his last muscles as the curtain falls on his dominance of the caucus. Or, maybe he has reverted to taking advice from his buddies atop a barstool. Whatever the reason, the idea that Albertans need bonus cheques instead of a government with vision and a plan is so sad as to be not worthy of an argument.

His own caucus sounded angrier than the Opposition, who seemed to view the Premier in the same way Martha does: an old fox deserving of our pity.

See the problem is, as Martha sees it, that this government has *not governed* for so long that there is a wide disparity between the rich and the poor.

Klein's musings made for some truly comedic times as his leadership hopefuls had to line up to say what a bad idea bonus cheques were. (Lyle Oberg being the most humorous as he stated: "Realistically, what did that \$400 do for the betterment of Alberta society? Whereas \$1.4 billion could have improved it quite significantly." Hmmm. Has he been

reading back issues of Martha's Monthly? Wasn't he a Minister when those cheques came out???)

It also brought out some of his own MLAs who favour bonus cheques. Here are two of his Conservative MLAs explaining why it is that people need the money:

Calgary-McCall MLA Shiraz Shariff said the January cheques were most appreciated in his blue-collar constituency. Not all Albertans have been beneficiaries of the so-called "Alberta advantage," he said. "I think we should be sending another round of cheques to Albertans," Shariff said. "I do know for many Albertans, \$400 is a lot of money."

Ray Danyluk, who represents the rural riding of Lac La Biche-St. Paul, said many of his constituents aren't in the oil and gas industry, and are struggling through a period of low commodity prices.

"If you're in the agriculture industry right now, you're dying."

The \$400 cheques came in handy for paying natural gas bills, he said.

Poor Premier Klein. His old friends (Oberg, Dinning, et al.) are lining up to say his idea was bad because it didn't get money to the right needs **and** his own caucus is admitting that the last 13 years of governance has resulted in farmers, blue-collar workers, and "many Albertans" struggling.

Given this sad state of the caucus it must be time for Premier Klein to hang up the chaps and the sidearms and just ride into the sunset. Martha just can't be mad at him, anymore than she was mad at that fox in the chicken barn. She may not have been mad at that old, pathetic fox but she did shoo him away.

This province is in dire need of a leader, a vision, and a plan. For too many years we have swallowed the same one-party lines. Now the party is split and they are admitting that the average Albertans needs \$400 and the community of Alberta needs "bettering" with the infusion of a real plan. So Marthas and Henrys, let's do something different this

month. Let's send Premier Klein a letter or an e-card (free ones with great shots of Canmore are at <http://www.canmorealberta.com/postcard/>) encouraging him to just retire. No hard feelings - it is time to go.

Send your email to premier@gov.ab.ca and us at marthasmnthly@yahoo.ca. You can fit in your whole address on the line that says "name" so your postcard will be counted as correspondence.

Martha chose a nice sunset and just told the premier that it was okay to say so long since we need a government that will govern, not sign more cheques.

Sometimes old foxes just need a gentle shooing.