

## Cheap beer, pricey promises

There's a lot of good-natured joking going on in our office about the buck-a-beer promise Ontario's party premier has made. Journalists, in general, like beer and stuff that's cheap, so this is hitting us right on the sweet spot.

In the United States, journalists are 'disgusting' and 'the enemy of the people?', but here in good ol' Ontario we're getting beer for a buck. We're not sure what beer we're going to get for that buck, but whatever it is it'll be stocked in the best spots possible because Doug Ford said so. You don't want to see your beer cheap? See you at foot level on the shelves.

This is because optics are important to Doug Ford, as they are to most politicians, but more so to the Doug Fords of the world because they know they don't bring a lot of policy wonk to the table. Ford is a self-proclaimed man of the people 'or man for the people' who, like Donald Trump, has a solid base to which he must cater or risk losing support. That base is an ever-hungry beast that must constantly be fed or risk its wrath.

Kathleen Wynne is not this type of person. We know who she tried to please and it was not anyone below the rank of CEO. The optics caught up to her with a vengeance.

Justin Trudeau is a man of the people, but only some of the people, and he has an act that threatens to wear thin at a moment's notice because his base is constantly shifting with the times. He's fortunate in that federal Conservative leader Andrew Sheer talks in sound bites and is tough to like, especially when he sounds more like an American conservative than a Canadian. Either way, neither one of them is going to offer you a beer for a buck.

So here's our premier keeping an election promise that will surely satisfy a lot of people. Problem is he's going to be keeping promises on the backs of the very people he's trying to please. It's not difficult to understand. Everything we use every day costs money. Health care, roads, education, police, subsidies, and a thousand other things all cost money 'including beer. Some of that money comes from cities, some from provinces and some from our friend in Ottawa.

Ford says his government won't subsidize any brewers for lowering the minimum price they can charge from \$1.25 to \$1.00. We'll see.

He has already scrapped the Guaranteed Basic Income pilot project, which, according to Lisa MacLeod, the minister responsible for children, community and social services, either did or did not break an election promise. It depends on the day you ask her.

This initiative wasn't permanent, hence the term pilot project. It would've been worth a good look just to gauge it, but offering hand-outs to poor people is not a kumbaya moment in Ford Nation.

Lowering the price of beer, on the other hand, is a winner.

Immigration is another sore spot. According to a recent Angus Reid survey, most Ontarians perceive the number of asylum seekers as a crisis.

This is a good time to show shrewd leadership skills and thoughtful solutions, but instead the Conservatives have blamed the Trudeau Liberals and demanded cash.

Cheap beer is nice. Cheap beer is fun. But if that's the best ya got, we're not looking forward to that nasty hangover that's coming soon.