



# Hansard Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

39th Parliament

## JOHN YAKABUSKI, M.P.P. - RENFREW-NIPISSING-PEMBROKE

Oral Question

March 9, 2009

### Nuclear Energy

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, earlier, in your answer to the third party leader, you mentioned preserving the jobs in Ontario's share in our auto sector.

Premier, the bids are in for new build nuclear in Ontario. What's left now is your decision on who will build those new reactors at Darlington. Considering that Ontario is bleeding jobs daily and you have repeatedly said that we are in extraordinary times, what is your plan to ensure that the almost 40,000 jobs, mostly in Ontario, associated with nuclear research, development and build are not lost if our own homegrown bidder, Atomic Energy of Canada, is not awarded the contract?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

**Hon. George Smitherman:** The honourable member's question is designed to make a mockery of a fair and competitive process over the most expensive item that you can procure in a province. So I just want to say to the honourable member that while he's a booster for one of the three bidders in particular, our process has been run with a very, very strenuous focus on extracting for the people of the province of Ontario the very best arrangement.

We have three quality bidders who are bringing their proposals to us in seeking to supply us with two new nuclear reactors. As we move forward to entering into a contract with one of those individual companies, it will be focused on the very best arrangements for the people of Ontario, which of course includes price, productivity and economic impact here in the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The Premier likes to talk about the new economy and how it will create the jobs Ontario needs. Well, I have news for you, Premier: Nuclear new build, here and around the world—here and around the world—and the research and development it requires, is an integral part of the new economy.

If you agree that not building our own Canadian-designed and -built reactors here will make building elsewhere unlikely, I ask you again, what is your plan to ensure that these jobs don't go the way of hundreds of thousands of others under your leadership?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** As a component of the measurement of which of these proponents we will seek to be in contract with, we have established, in the very mechanisms and nature of the bid, opportunities for a company to earn points associated with the economic impact that they will have here in the province of Ontario.

We acknowledge, of course, that there has been a domestic industry for some time, and the province of Ontario has been their very best customer for a long time. But there are competitive technologies, and we think it's important, since it is such a substantial procurement-because it is for a 50- or 60-year lifeline-that we make a decision on the basis of what is the best price and what is the best productivity associated with the technology on offer. But economic development and the impact it has here in the province of Ontario is one essential component of all bids that are being evaluated at the present time.