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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

39th Parliament

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

POINT OF ORDER – Feb 17th, 2010

USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. John Yakabuski: On a point of order, Speaker: Earlier in the day, the member for Thornhill had a question, and on his supplementary it was ruled out of order. I would like to have the opportunity to request some clarification on that.

Based on standing order 37-and I have the question before me-you said that it didn't apply. The matter is of public importance. It's very, very significant in that order, and it's highlighted.

I also want to refer to Marleau, who says in his book here, "Members should be given the greatest possible freedom in the putting of questions that is consistent with the other principles," and also that they "ask a question that is within the administrative responsibility of the government or the individual minister addressed."

The Premier, of course, is the head of the government. If you look at the body of the question, it was specifically asking questions as to why the Liberal members are distancing themselves from policies of this government: the HST, the sweetheart Samsung deal, increased energy costs and higher fees.

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I would ask-the question was very much in order, based on the standing orders of this legislative body, and it should not have been ruled out of order based on simply requesting clarification on the Premier's composition of his cabinet. Those are also questions that the public is asking, not questioning the prerogative of the Premier in choosing a cabinet, but the standards by which he chooses that cabinet-the standards he has when choosing members of his cabinet. Those are questions that are being asked in the media and in the public domain as well. So I think that it is pertinent to question period, and it should have been ruled in order.