

'Uhoh! Looks like Paul isn't allowed to handle certain questions anymore!'

Virtual Paul Calandra draws laugh from real MP

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Getting called out for not speaking enough French in the House of Commons or being accused of using poor grammar by the opposition hits almost below the belt.

Create a website in which you can ask a virtual Paul Calandra, the Oak Ridges-Markham MP and parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister, anything and he'll respond with an unrelated answer and you've got him laughing.

"It's good-natured fun. I like that kind of fun," he told The Sun-Tribune earlier this week.

The only criticism the Stouffville resident has about the website is its creators could have used a more flattering photograph.

The website allows you to type in any question you have for Mr. Calandra and you immediately get "totally authentic Calandra answers right from the House of Commons".

The website contains this updated message: "Uhoh! Looks

like Paul isn't allowed to handle certain questions anymore!"

We sent an e-mail to the contact address on the website, but a response was not received prior to our deadline.

The goal of the website is to have it be the top Google hit when you search Paul Calandra.

The website's disclaimer notes it is not affiliated with Mr. Calandra or the Conservative Party of Canada.

"It is meant for entertainment purposes only. All answers are real garbage as spewed from the mouth of Paul Calandra."

It has 893 Facebook likes and has been tweeted out 439 times, according to the website.

Askpaulcalandra.com means somebody is listening and felt compelled enough by what he or she heard to collect the quotes from the House of Commons' question periods to create it, which is OK with Mr. Calandra.

"Whatever gets people more engaged," he said.

The MP knows his style of speaking isn't for everyone.



PAUL CALANDRA: MP drawing heat from opposition for his answers in House of Commons.

"The Ottawa press gallery, they don't live in my riding, they don't vote for me so I don't care what they think. ... I say what I think and that's the end of it. I'm not going to become Mr. Politician in the House of Commons because people don't like it," he said.

The one man who could ask Mr. Calandra to change, hasn't.

In fact, according to Mr. Calandra, when Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered him the parliamentary secretary's position, he was told to not change who he was.

"I think that would look even more awkward" if I changed, Mr. Calandra said.

Of late, the Liberals and NDPs have gone after the MP for not providing his answers in French.

Mr. Calandra said he is bilingual, but prefers to respond in English because the answers are complex and he does not want any misinterpretations to occur.

The opposition has also pointed out Mr. Calandra isn't always the most grammatically correct when he answers.

"It's kind of hard to be Winston Churchill in 35 seconds," he said.

Mr. Calandra said he has also been attacked because, for the past five months, he has given the same answers to questions related to the Senate scandal.

"I think it would be a bigger story if I changed my answer every

time," he said.

Mr. Calandra obviously has no problem putting himself out there, but sometimes the public's responses can get out of line, especially the violent posts he receives via Twitter.

"Twitter itself is possibly one of the most negative mediums I have ever seen."

"That kind of stuff is just stupid," he said, adding that on a daily basis he reports violent tweets to Twitter. He also contacts the RCMP daily regarding similarly-worded e-mails.

Mr. Calandra said he recently discussed what to do about Twitter with his staff, but it was decided it was more important to provide information to those who use the social media site properly, than to abandon it all together.

"Twitter itself is possibly one of the most negative mediums I have ever seen," he said.

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