

*Oral Questions*

the possible falloff in future tax revenues due to the current recession?

● (1120)

**Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I will be giving a precise statement on the cash balances of the government on June 23 and the projected cash deficit.

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**AGRICULTURE****CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST HOWARD BUCHAN, CHIEF OF FIELD OPERATIONS FOR PRAIRIE FARM ASSISTANCE ACT—GOVERNMENT ACTION**

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture who is in charge of the Prairie Farm Assistance Act administration. According to the press today Howard Ernest Buchan, chief of field operations for the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, is to appear in magistrate's court on a charge of defrauding the federal government. According to an inspector of the Mounted Police the charges relate to the 1974 federal election campaign and favours and pay-offs to PFAA employees with Liberal sympathies. In the absence of the Minister of Justice, who is the minister of elections for the Liberal party in Saskatchewan, I ask the Minister of Agriculture what about this charge; are other charges to be laid and, in particular, because this investigation has been going on since December or perhaps prior thereto was Mr. Buchan suspended pending the result of the preliminary hearing and/or his trial.

**Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether Mr. Buchan has been suspended, but in any event his term of office is up either the first or the end of July.

**An hon. Member:** He is going to the Senate.

**Mr. Whelan:** I wish to make it plain that I did not hire him. As I said earlier, if there is any wrongdoing let the courts take the proper procedure. I just received this report yesterday. I have not issued any instructions concerning whether he should be suspended. I will be meeting with my officials this afternoon.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I will return to this subject on Monday. The jovial minister is always here and I know he will be around. I notice that at the preliminary hearing the Crown apparently made the request that this charge be set for June 12, the day after the provincial election. Is there any significance in that fact?

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Speaker, this minister certainly would not interfere with the decisions of the courts or the police.

[Mr. Stevens.]

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****OBJECTION OF ONTARIO TO ATTENDANCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION AT CONFERENCE IN TORONTO—GOVERNMENT POSITION**

**Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask some general policy questions about the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the UN meeting on criminology. In the absence of the Prime Minister and in the absence of the Secretary of State for External Affairs I guess I am stuck with the House leader.

**An hon. Member:** And we are stuck with you, Al.

**Mr. Lawrence:** In light of the revelations as long ago as May 9 that the government of Ontario made representations to this government and to the Prime Minister that it would be displeased if the PLO was admitted to the conference in Toronto this summer, I should like to ask the Acting Prime Minister if a reply has yet been given the Premier of Ontario by the Prime Minister. If not, when will it be forthcoming? Will we be advised about this? Is the government still adamant in its stand that any invitation extended by the United Nations automatically will permit any such terrorist group to come to Canada?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that a reply has yet been sent because the government has been looking very carefully at this question. As the hon. gentleman knows, we are host to a UN conference; we do not invite the members. There is a problem, however, with which we are now trying to cope, which is that we do not allow terrorists into this country under our immigration proceedings. This is a very difficult problem which I am sure my hon. friend understands. We have a responsibility as a member of the United Nations to observe the organization's rules. We also have a responsibility not to allow terrorists into this country. It is a very difficult problem and one that I am sure my hon. friend understands and would not want to exploit.

**Mr. Lawrence:** As usual, the House leader is making assumptions he should not be making.

In view of the apparent contradiction between the prohibited class as outlined in the House the other day by the minister whose responsibility it is to speak on these matters, and in view of what the Acting Prime Minister has now indicated, could he advise the House when the government could undertake to terminate this contradiction, whether there will be a determination of government policy, and if the government, out of courtesy if nothing else, could advise us whether there would be an opportunity for us to discuss the matter when the decision is made and certainly when a reply is given to the Premier of Ontario?

**Mr. Sharp:** As the hon. gentleman knows, this conference is to be held in September. We have to make our decision soon. I am sure it will be conveyed to the House and the public, if the House is then in session. I do not know whether I can undertake to promise that there would be a discussion in the House. There are many