



CANADA

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## SUCCOR FOR GRAIN FARMERS

The following statement was made in the House of Commons on January 19 by Mr. Gordon Churchill, Canadian Minister of Trade and Commerce:

"The Government has been concerned in recent months with the problem faced by western grain farmers who, because of abnormal and unreasonable rain and snowstorms, have been prevented from harvesting their crops.

"The Wheat Board undertook a survey of unharvested grain and flaxseed as at October 16. This survey indicated that 250 million bushels of wheat, oats, barley, rye and flaxseed remained unthreshed as at mid-October. This represented about 27 per cent of the estimated 1959 harvest in the Prairie Provinces. It was more serious for producers in wide areas in Central and Northern Alberta; in Northern Saskatchewan and in Northern and Eastern Manitoba, where from 50 per cent to 100 per cent of the 1959 grain crops were unharvested.

"In November, and again in the first half of December, weather conditions were such that producers, in many areas, could get on with harvesting operations. The Wheat Board surveyed the position again in the first week of December and at that time it was estimated that 100 million bushels of grain remained unthreshed. Thus, according to the best estimates available, the quantity of unthreshed grain diminished by about 150 million bushels, between mid-October and the first week of December.

"While the overall problem has diminished in extent, there are many producers in each of the western provinces, especially in the more northerly areas, who have been unable to complete a major part of their harvesting. These producers must await the spring before they can thresh the grain under the snow. The proposed legislation is designed specifically to meet the needs of producers whose income is deferred until they have an opportunity to complete harvesting operations. The fact that considerable progress has been made in harvesting since mid-October does not in any way subtract from the problems of producers who have been unable to make substantial progress in threshing their 1959 grain crops.

"In the light of the experience with cash advances under the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act, the Government feels that the principle and procedures of that Act can be applied in meeting the exceptional circumstances which now exist in respect to that portion of the 1959 wheat, oats and barley crops which remain unthreshed or partially unthreshed.

"In the case of unthreshed grain the future position cannot, of course, be precisely defined. Neither producers nor elevator agents know how much grain will ultimately be threshed, or to what extent weathering will affect the grades. However, it is felt that this element of uncertainty can be overcome through the practice of endorsing permit books

(Over)