ICLC United Front Proposal for Europe and USSR

Expand Trade, Agriculture; Declare War on Rockefeller

"The peasants, workers, Social Democrats, and Soviet officials of Europe must act now"

In the immediate weeks ahead the survival of Western Europe is on the line: either it will take the historic step of implementing the International Caucus of Labor Committees (ICLC) proposal of debt moratorium and the remonetization of gold or it will collapse into fascism.

But the very moment it takes this first step, it must be ready to take the next. The debt moratorium and Golden Snake, if implemented, would break Rockefeller's stranglehold grip on the imposition of fascist austerity. Once this is done, Western Europe cannot retreat — **Western Europe must declare war.** If it does not immediately go on the offensive, if it does not instantly mobilize all its energies towards crushing Rockefeller, then Europe, itself, will be destroyed. Rockefeller will win the war through deadly economic embargoes and blockades.

It is the method for winning this war that the ICLC now addresses. Western Europe can win this Stalingrad battle and give to the world's working class the precious year or two it needs to organize power. **Its victory depends upon the immediate implementation of a united front of expanded trade and economic cooperation between continental Europe (with the possible inclusion of Japan) and the nations of the Soviet bloc.** If it tries to ignore or side-step the working class call to battle, then it will be isolated and defeated. Western Europe will quickly die.

How It Will Work

The dependence of Western Europe on the outside world, particularly the Rockefeller-controlled interests of raw materials and food from the U.S. and abroad, cannot be overstated. If the Rockefeller forces were to throw up an economic blockade, Western Europe, without raw materials (especially fuel) and agricultural commodities (particularly grain imports), would collapse in a matter of months. For example, the countries of the continental European Economic Community (EEC) import some 40 million tons of grain and animal feedstuffs per year, yet Rockefeller controls the major grain exporting companies like Cargill. Additionally, Rockefeller controls Mideast oil on which Europe is 90 per cent dependent, as well as basic metals, like iron ore.

The ICLC united front expanded trade proposal not only can bust through any form of Rockefeller blockade, it can actually pull Western Europe out of the deepening depression. Western Europe has the skilled labor force and the industrial capacity (or potentiality) for producing the capital goods — machine tools, farm machinery, etc. — that the Soviet bloc countries

Table 1 | Commodity	EEC Imports million tons	Soviet Production million tons	Soviet Reserves million tons	years
Iron ore	50	200	300,000	1,000
Copper ore	1.6	.6	40	20
Aluminum ore (bauxite)	2.0	1.2	60	20
Lead ore	.6	.5	17	15
Zinc ore	.7	.7	14	10
Manganese ore	2.0	7.3	200	20
Petroleum	400	450	10,000	10

This table compares the total imports of the most important raw materials in the EEC countries with the productive capacity of the Soviet Union. The last column shows the number of years of reserves in the Soviet Union at production levels adequate for both Soviet and European needs. Since fusion power developments will take less than ten years, these reserves are adequate — in fact, far more than adequate since only one or two years are required to destroy capitalism. The amounts of mining and oil drilling equipment to increase the exploitation of presently developed mines and fields is significant only in the case of petroleum and iron ore. Some $400 million worth of such equipment is required, less than present EEC exports of such machinery.

Table 2 Method for Determining Expanded Cereals Production

Group (Economic Regions listed for USSR)	Crop Area (in 1000 ha)	Projected Fertilizer/Hectare (in k.g.)	Present Yield* (in m.t.)	Expected Yield (in m.t.)	Total Expanded Production (in thousand m.t.)
Group I					
Southwest	2,796	450	1.7	5	13,980
Transcaucasia	1,218	450	.8	5	6,090
S. Far East	572	450	1.1	5	2,860
Ural	6,864	450	1.0	5	34,320
Volga-Vyatka	916	450	1.0	5	4,580
Group II					
Centre	1,672	350	1.4	4	6,688
Belorussia	228	350	1.2	4	912
Baltic	268	350	1.6	4	1,072
Bulgaria	1,014	350	3.0	4	4,056
Czechoslovakia	1,081	350	3.0	4	4,324
East Germany	598	350	3.6	4	2,324
Hungary	1,274	350	2.1	4	5,096
Poland	1,985	350	2.3	4	7,940
Yugoslavia	1,831	350	2.1	4	7,324
Group III					
Volga	9,952	230	1.2	3	29,856
North Caucasus	5,060	230	1.0	3	15,180
Blackearth	2,028	230	1.5	3	6,084
S.W. Siberia	9,008	230	.8	3	27,024
South	1,874	230	1.2	3	5,622
Moldavia	866	230	1.4	3	2,598
Donets-Dnepr	2,926	230	1.2	3	8,778
Rumania	2,321	230	1.5	3	6,963
Group IV					
Central Asia	1,236		.6	1.8	2,224
Kazakhstan	17,125		1.0	1.8	30,825
Northwest	147		1.0	1.8	265

*Present Yield for USSR Regions is based upon spring wheat which has a slightly lower yield than winter wheat. Eastern European's Present Yield is for all varities of wheat.

This table demonstrates the methodology used to determine expanded cereal production (see text for explanation and definition of Groups). This table is based upon calculations for wheat; similar charts were constructed for the other major grains. Note that the lowest present yields in the USSR are often in areas of large crop area (e.g., Kazakhstan). This is because of extensive farming practices where additional land is brought under cultivation at the expense of fertillizer and mechanical inputs.

desperately need to develop further. The Soviet bloc, particularly the Soviet Union, can in turn supply Western Europe with abundant raw material, particularly fuel, and agricultural commodities, particularly grains.

The rapid exploitation of the earth's natural resources, especially its energy sources, is a key component of the ICLC proposal. Our ability to put forward such a bold program is premised upon the brute force development of fusion power which must be achieved within the next five years. As long as the Soviet bloc and Western Europe join forces around a crash program of fusion power, there is absolutely no reason to fear an ecological or energy crisis.

While there are two sides to this exchange for the Soviet bloc's raw materials (fuel, metals, etc.) and for agricultural commodities, we will limit our developed explanations to agricultural trade. As the accompanying box demonstrates, the raw material exchange is a relatively simple proposition; the question of agricultural production and exchange is much more complex.

Agriculture in the Soviet Bloc

Agriculture in the Soviet bloc, particularly in the Soviet Union, is in abysmal shape. While the Soviet Union is the world's largest producer of cereal grains, especially wheat, it is only because of the extensive land area under cultivation. Crop yields per hectare (equivalent to 2-1/2 acres) are as low as 1.4 metric tons, and on a par with underdeveloped countries such as Kenya. The Eastern European countries, while not as low as the Soviet Union, have yields considerably lower than Western Europe. While part of the reason is climatic — in the Soviet Union, the climate in many areas is too cold or too dry — the basic reason is the shortage of capital inputs, mainly fertilizers and mechanization.

The amount of fertilizer, for example, used in the intensive farming of the Netherlands is more than four times greater than the extensive farming of the Soviet bloc. Thus in 1970, the Soviet Union used only 91 kg/hectare compared to the Netherlands average use of 450 kg/hectare.

Similarly, the Soviet bloc and especially the Soviet Union have a grossly inadequate number of tractors. Presently, the hectare per tractor ratio ranges from 73 to 90 hectares in Eastern Europe to 125 hectares in the Soviet Union, compared with 43.5 hectares per tractor in the U.S.

To compensate for capital goods scarcity, extensive farming — or the practice of expanding land area with few fertilizer or farm machinery inputs — has been dominant in the Soviet Union. This has meant that "virgin land" areas such as Kazakhstan, where precipitation rate is low and therefore yields are low, have become major grain producing regions in the Soviet Union. But with vastly increased capital inputs, large land areas of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union would be able to equal, if not surpass, the highest yielding sectors of present-day advanced intensive Western agriculture.

How the United Front Would Expand Production

With the implementation of the United Front agreement on expanded trade, agricultural production will be rapidly expanded to benefit the entire European and Soviet working class. If this proposal were adopted, for example, in late summer, it would mean the following:

- That by the harvest of 1975, within a single growing season, the Soviet bloc would be able to maintain Western Europe's current grain imports of 40 million metric tons, mainly through vast increases in the amount of fertilizer and mechanization used.
- That by the second growing season, in 1976, through even greater use of fertilization and mechanization and through partial conversion of fodder crops and meadow land to grains, the Soviet bloc countries could triple their grain output to more than 600 million metric tons. Thus they would be able dramatically to increase the nutritional standards of the European and Soviet working class and become a major net exporter to the developing countries.
- That by the third growing season, in 1977, through further intensification and vast expansion of agriculture, mainly through massive irrigation and drainage schemes, the Soviet bloc could further increase food exports to the developing nations.

The Major Inputs

The key to agricultural expansion is the expansion of grain production. As grains are to be used almost exclusively for the expansion of livestock feed, the per capita consumption of meat and dairy products (the primary protein foods) will markedly increase. Soviet cattle, for example, now receive about 35 per cent less in grain feed units as compared with U.S. cattle. As a result milk yield per cattle is approximately 50 per cent lower in the USSR. Consumption of meat is only 106 grams per Soviet worker per day or about one-third of the amount consumed by the average U.S. worker. In addition, Western European meat consumption, especially in light of the near collapse of the EEC livestock sector, is drastically down to the point that a British worker in 1973 ate slightly more than 6 ounces of beef per week. [See IPS "State of Agriculture" this issue]

The four key inputs necessary for Soviet bloc agriculture to quadruple grain production to more than 900 million metric tons are: **fertilizer use, mechanization, land expansion, and infrastructural development.** While there are other factors such as the elimination of the private plot (used mainly for growing vegetables both for direct peasant subsistence and sale of produce to raise inadequate incomes) and the need for extensive collectivization in certain Eastern European countries such as Poland (only 14 per cent collectivized) and Yugoslavia (30 per cent), these tend to be of a secondary nature. With the intensification of agriculture, they should be eliminated quickly as bottlenecks.

Fertilizer

Fertilizer use is the key component for immediately increasing crop yields. With about 40 million additional metric tons of fertilizer, the Soviet bloc can nearly double its grain output — thus increasing the production of wheat, corn, rye, barley, and oats from over 233 million metric tons to over 430 million metric tons, or a net increase of nearly 200 million. This increase can be achieved without adding a single hectare of land area.

With this 200 million metric ton increase, total production in the EEC and the Soviet Union combined would be raised to the equivalent of one ton of grain per capita. This is sufficient to raise the European and Soviet diet to the present level of the U.S. — tripling the meat consumption of the Soviet population and nearly doubling that of the European.

The methodology employed in reaching these conclusions is important. While these estimates are only approximate, they are more than significantly accurate to demonstrate the basic potentialities in increased yield.

We first grouped the regions of the Soviet bloc into classifications consisting of similar climatic conditions and soil types. We then compared such groups with developed countries having similar climatic conditions and practicing intensive farming. We then calculated the total yield and volume of fertilizer on the basis of assuming that, with identical fertilizer input, similar yields, under similar conditions, would occur [see Table 2]. The Netherlands, for example, was found to have similar climatic and soil-type conditions as most of Eastern Europe and certain sections of the Soviet Union.

In terms of the relationship of grouping to yield, precipitation is the key limiting factor. For example, all those regions in Group I, the highest yielding group, had

an annual precipitation rate of at least 24 inches. Conversely, Group IV, the lowest yielding group, had an annual precipitation rate of under 16 inches. Fertilizer, for maximum effectiveness, must have adequate precipitation; otherwise, with low precipitation, the point of diminishing returns is quite low.

Mechanization

The Soviet bloc, in order to achieve par with the U.S., must nearly triple its level of mechanization. This means the production of at least six million more tractors and one million combines to bring Soviet bloc agriculture to U.S. levels. Spare parts production must also be increased.

Without mechanization, any substantial increase in volume production will be practically impossible. Tractors are needed to prepare the land, seed, and spread the fertilizer; combines are needed to harvest the crop. Furthermore, already about one-third of the Soviet bloc labor force is directly engaged in agriculture. This must be quickly reduced to at least the level of the U.S. where approximately five per cent of the workforce is employed in agriculture. This would allow about 68.5 million peasants to be freed from the land for industrial and infrastructural development.

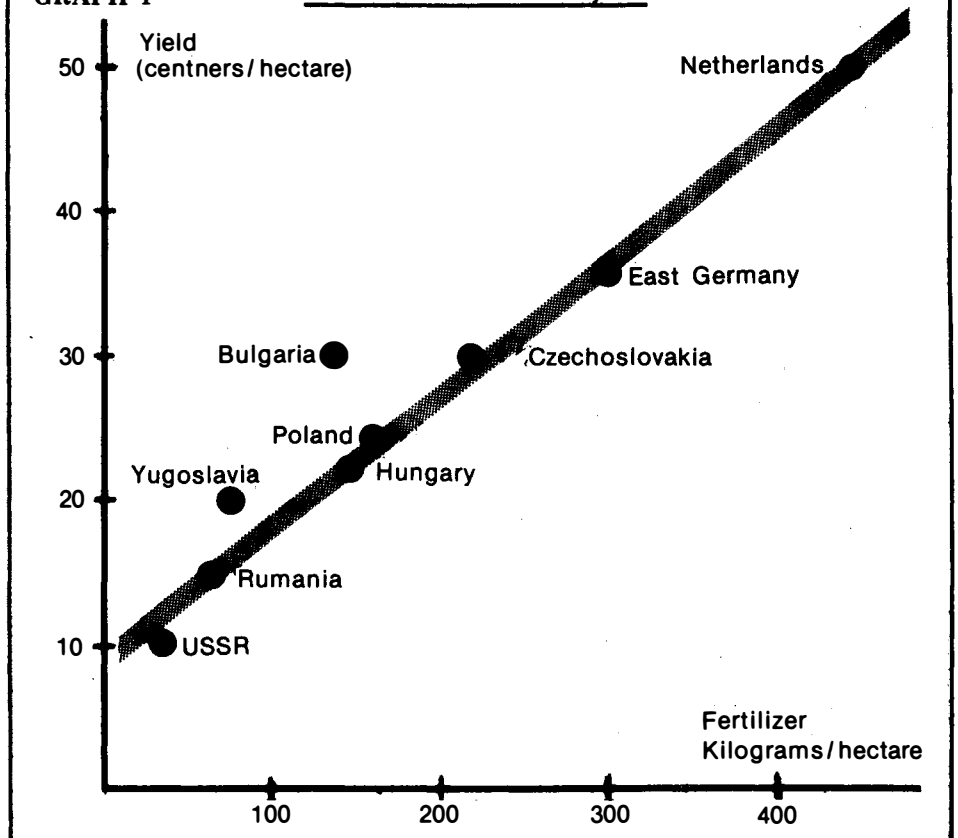
Land Expansion

Through land expansion of grain production, a second-stage development, output will be tripled to at least 690 million metric tons of grain. This will be possible chiefly as a result of crop and land conversion as well as through drainage and particularly irrigation.

By converting 50 per cent of the low nutritious fodder crops — hay, grasses, green corn — to grain, nearly 30 million additional hectares of land yielding 100 million metric tons of grain could be brought under cultivation. Similarly by converting 50 per cent of existing meadow land (usually fertile land now used for grazing) grain production can be increased by an additional 100 million metric tons.

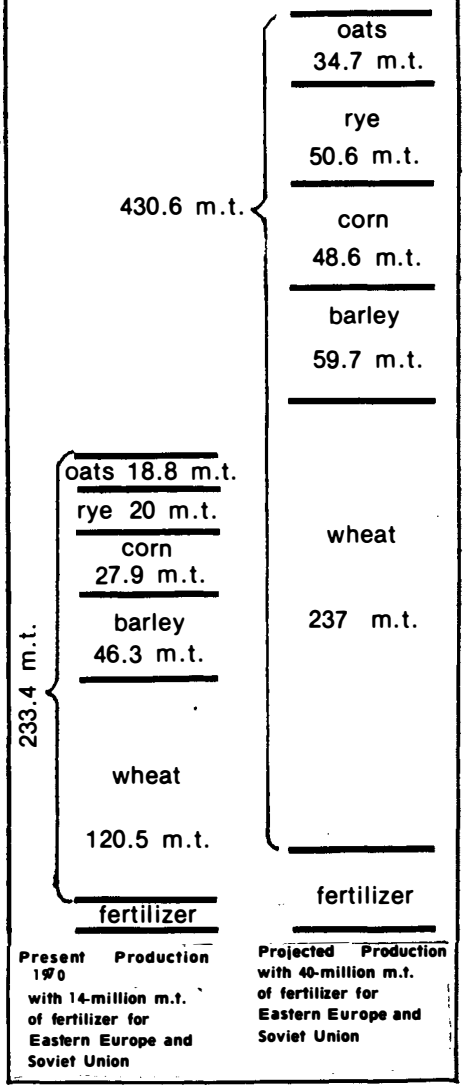
Through drainage and irrigation schemes, potentially fertile marshland areas in the Baltic region of the USSR and desert areas in the Soviet republics of Central Asia

GRAPH 1 Wheat — fertilizer and yield



This graph clearly demonstrates the relation of fertilizer input to yield. Note that the graph has not yet reached diminishing returns from amount of fertilizer.

Chart 1
Expanded Grain Production
metric tons in millions



and Kazakhstan can be transformed into crop land. This will mean that in the southern desert area, warm weather crops like corn and soybeans (the most nutritious feedstuffs) can be grown extensively. Although presently irrigation is limited by the water supply, with fusion power providing the energy for massive desalinization of sea water, irrigation can be unlimited.

Infrastructure

The expansion of agriculture demands the further development of the infrastructure. The transportation system must be upgraded; storage facilities and farm buildings must be constructed; the workforce must receive intensive skill training; and the general standard of living — more and better housing, schools, health care, culture facilities — must be upgraded.

One of the most immediate tasks is the construction of proper grain storage elevators. Even with current low production, the Soviet bloc cannot realize its full production in that millions of tons of grain rot for lack of proper storage. Even to meet the demands of current production, storage facilities must be initially expanded by at least 25 per cent and then further expanded by 100 per cent.

In order to transport the grain, three million trucks must be assembled; and the railroads, particularly in the Soviet Union must be upgraded and expanded. Thousands of additional boxcars will be needed.

As peasants are forced to operate and repair complex farm machinery and as more precision planning and scientific knowledge is required, the skill levels must be elevated quickly. Large-scale training programs during the off-season must be instituted for all peasants. General educational levels and standard of living must be rapidly improved. As land expansion occurs, whole new communities must be built.

Western Europe's Critical Role

In summary, the Soviet bloc cannot expand agriculture without the following:

* At least 40 million additional metric tons of fertilizer
* 6 million more tractors
* 1 million more combines
* 3 million more trucks
* Other capital goods, especially machine tools, for the development of drainage and irrigation systems, infrastructure construction, etc.

The 40 million tons of fertilizer that the Soviet bloc needs for immediate expansion of grain production can easily be manufactured by the chemical workers of Italy and Germany. And this 40 million tons is just the beginning. With practically unlimited supplies of natural gas exported to Western Europe from the Soviet Union, the production of key nitrogenous fertilizers (manufactured from natural gas) would be almost infinite. The construction of 20 large scale fertilizer plants (the number of additional plants needed to produce the initial 30 million ton quota) would be quite simple. Only 6,000 machine tools would be necessary to produce the necessary equipment to build the 20 plants in a year's time. (Germany, alone, produces 450,000 machine tools per year.)

Farm machinery production is a far more socially expensive task. However, by converting 50 per cent of the Western European auto industry — already nearly 30 per cent idle — to tractor, truck and combine production, Europe has the capability of producing the Soviet bloc's needs in about two years.

Current auto production in West Germany, Italy, and France combined is about 11 million per year. In order to achieve the farm machinery production needed by the Soviet bloc, six million tractors would require three million auto units (an auto unit being equivalent to the production of one auto). Three million trucks would require three million auto units for a total of ten million auto units. Thus at 50 per cent conversion this capacity can be achieved in less than two years. By fully utilizing capacity in the auto industry and by necessary increased production of steel and machine tools, the number of expanded jobs will be about one and one-half million in auto and scores of thousands more in the steel and machine tool industry.

But this is just the start. As the Soviet bloc further expands agricultural production and especially their infrastructure, untold numbers of capital goods, especially machine tools, will be needed. With Europe's increased access to greater raw materials, particularly fuel and food from the Soviet bloc, it will be able to expand production further. This industrial expansion, in turn, will allow Europe to take on serious reconstruction programs centered on building housing, schools and hospitals; developing rapid mass transportation systems; and increasing the general educational, cultural and general well-being of the entire population. With Europe and the Soviet bloc allied around a crash program of fusion power development, this expansion and reconstruction can be unlimited.

The peasants, workers, Social Democrats, and Soviet officials of Europe must act now.