

Russian grain purchases are part of Mondale backers' famine plan

by Christopher White

The latest estimates of Russian grain purchases for the marketing year which ends Oct. 1 are that the Russians have already contracted for a near record import level of 43 million tons. This is running at slightly more than 20% of the estimated total world grain trade for the year. About half of the total amount is slated to be provided by the United States.

There are many who delude themselves that the record levels of Soviet purchases demonstrate that the world is not being pushed rapidly towards confrontation. After all, while every other kind of negotiation between the superpowers has been broken off, the Russians keep coming back to the United States for their supplies of grain. This kind of wishful thinking is fed by the forecasting of Soviet harvest, circulated by officials of the relevant section of the Department of Agriculture. In their view, Soviet food requirements keep increasing along with the U.S. capacity to satisfy those increased needs.

This kind of approach was espoused by Agriculture Secretary John Block in an Aug. 17 press conference. "We don't want to hold back their buying in any way," he said. "The trade relationship with the Soviet Union is in excellent shape." It was a year ago, on Aug. 26, that Secretary Block signed the current five-year agreement with the Russians in a ceremony in Moscow. Four days later, the Russian command cold-bloodedly shot down Korean Airlines Flight 007. Those who separate out what they consider to be the Russians' trading requirements from their strategic military deployments are making a big mistake.

Two elements are thus overlooked. First, the expanded pattern of Russian purchases is part of the master plan organized by the backers of the presidential campaign of Walter Mondale to cause a world food crisis (see *EIR* Aug. 14, "Mondale backers plan fall food shortages"). Second, the grain to fulfill the contracts probably does not exist. The contract signed by Block last August, after two years of negotiations by Assistant Agriculture Secretary Seely Lodwick and his successor Daniel Amstutz, a former employee of the Mondale-backing Cargill Grain company, and Henry Kissinger's Wall Street Bank Goldman Sachs, was designed to leave the United States with no "outs."

It is instructive in this regard to compare Article II of the

current agreement with the Russians with the corresponding article in the agreement now in effect with the People's Republic of China. In the former, the contracting parties agree that:

During the term of this agreement, except as otherwise agreed by the Parties, the Government of the U.S.A. shall not exercise any discretionary authority available to it under United States law to control exports of commodities purchased for supply to the U.S.S.R. in accordance with Article I.

The parallel clause in the 1980 agreement with the Chinese includes the following reservation, which is absent from the above:

If by virtue of exceptional circumstances necessitating the application of measures limiting the availability of United States wheat and corn in respect to all foreign purchasers of United States grain, it becomes necessary in a particular year to supply less than the quantities specified in Article I, there shall be prior consultation between the two parties as to the amount of such adjustment.

In this respect, the agreement that was sealed Aug. 26, 1983 in Moscow marked a departure for the United States. Previously Washington had kept the option to cancel contracts within either 180 or 270 days of their conclusion, if stocks within the United States fell below a certain level. The reasons for keeping such an "out" include, as is evident in the case of the agreement with the People's Republic of China, the need to secure domestic supplies.

Soviet negotiator Boris Gordeev was reported to have insisted on the extension of the cancellation time beyond 270 days, and on the reduction of the 225 million metric tons carryover plus stocks level as the trigger for activating the suspension of sales and shipments. But on the United States side, pressure was exerted by both the grain companies, and their lobby associations, to drop all such conditions, in order to reestablish the United States as a "reliable supplier."

Before the talks resumed, for example, the National

Association of Wheat Growers, one of the commodity group fronts for the grain cartel of Cargill, Continental, André, Bunge, and Dreyfuss, met with the U.S. negotiators, including Daniel Amstutz and Deputy Special Trade Representative Robert Lightizer, to stress "the importance of assuring the Soviets that the United States would be a reliable grain supplier in future years." The chairman of the Board of U.S. Wheat Associates, Harrell Ridley, said that "the number one priority should be to restore trust in the willingness of the U.S. to supply the Soviet import needs."

And one year before, in the Agricultural Export Expansion Act of 1982, congressmen like Sen. David Durenberger of the Cargill state of Minnesota had amended U.S. export law on agricultural commodities to read as follows:

Notwithstanding any other provision of U.S. law, the Government of the United States shall not impose any restriction upon the exportation of agricultural commodities which interferes with valid contracts for the exportation of such commodities entered into before the date such export restriction is imposed and which provide for the delivery of such commodities for exportation not later than 180 days after such date, except that the President may prohibit or curtail the export of the commodity during a period for which the President has declared a national emergency or for which the Congress has declared war.

The ostensible reason for this was to overcome the effects of the Carter 1980 embargo imposed after the Russians invaded Afghanistan at the end of 1979.

But if that is really the case, why is it that those who have pushed to modify U.S. law and trading practice in this way are the same who have argued most vociferously for the reduction of U.S. production and surpluses, through such means as the Payment-in-Kind (PIK) program, and other acreage reduction or so-called conservation efforts?

Cutting back production

Even while the negotiations with the Russians were ongoing, spokesmen for Cargill, like Dan Huber and Peter Kooi of the Commodity Marketing Division of the company, were arguing for measures "to correct over-production," while simultaneously calling for "long-term agreements with the U.S.S.R. and P.R.C." This program has been endorsed by Mondale campaign backer Orville Freeman, chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Hubert Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs in Minnesota where the Mondale campaign was designed. Freeman demands that the "government should compel farmers to cut production," but he also wants "a long-range farm program to provide a world market clearing non-recourse loans for large producers." This would tie certain producers into long-term agreements, such as those concluded with the Russians.

A program of cutting production, increasing exports, and

also attempting to annul and repeal the legal instruments which would permit the government to act under the ensuing crisis, can only be seen as part of a willful effort to create a food shortage, and a global political crisis around the food question. It is difficult to imagine anything that could be more evil. What do these characters imagine will happen, say between Oct. 1 and Oct. 14 of this year, when the Russians demand proof that the grain they have contracted actually exists?

Lester Brown, a henchman of Orville Freeman at the World Watch Institute in Washington, D.C., put it this way in October 1982: "The long line of grain-laden ships linking U.S. farms with Soviet dining tables represents a major new economic relationship, one that could eventually transform their political relations as well." What kind of "new economic relationship" can be expected from a genocide advocate like Brown, who advocates the "Chinese model" of population control—infanticide, forced sterilization, and abortion?

U.S. negotiators have been encouraging the Russians to purchase more than 20 million tons a year every year since 1982. But those were also the years in which the PIK program was implemented ferociously! First against the feed grains, such as corn, which were to provide the bulk of Russian purchases, and then, in this last year, against wheat. National surveys of the yields in this year's harvests indicate that behind the USDA's projections of another bumper year for U.S. grain growers, the crops are just not there.

U.S.-Soviet grain trade expanded most vigorously after the grain cartel employed Henry Kissinger to pull off the 1972 deal with the Russians. In the year following that agreement, Orville Freeman calculated that 500 million people died from famine, or the consequences of malnutrition, worldwide. At the time, Mexican President Luis Echeverría and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi charged that the superpowers were cooperating to starve the populations of the Third World.

These leaders underestimated the criminal insanity of the forces which determine food policy in both Moscow and Washington; both share the racist genocidal outlook seen in earlier phases of human history when empires, such as the Babylonian and the Roman, employed the methods of food control to rule over populations that were considered to be no better than talking beasts. It has been the achievement of the American republic to break absolutely with that oligarchic method of political rule, in fostering the productivity of its farmers through encouraging progress in science and technology. The food crisis that has been set up for this fall threatens to eliminate the most productive capabilities that mankind has yet developed as oligarchs of East and West attempt to rebuild the world in their self-image, without too many functioning human beings. The looming disaster can still be prevented, but not without a major house cleaning around Washington, D.C., and related locales such as Walter Mondale's Minnesota.