

government has so far taken to solve the agricultural crisis, Tennaileau indicated that "some parliamentarians have already informally voiced the FFA's demands to the government...and the government has made known that on September 29, exceptional measures will be taken in favor of the agricultural sector." He blasted the government's Economic Plan — currently under discussion in the National Assembly — for preparing "the elimination of 500,000 jobs in French agriculture." Asked about French Finance Minister Fourcade's recent statements declaring debt moratoria acceptable only in the most "desperate cases," Maisson snapped that "the government and (Prime Minister) Chirac should look to the United States as an example. At one point, the American farmers demanded general debt moratoria for American agriculture."

Tennaileau expressed strong disappointment that other French farmers' associations have so far refused to work jointly with the FFA for debt moratoria. "Last year, we had already presented our proposal to all professional organizations. You could say we have tried to provoke a meeting. Unfortunately, so far responses have been negative." Questioned on the response of the Communist Party-linked MODEF farmers' organization, Tennaileau snorted, "When we presented them with our proposal, they responded negatively and then afterwards they took up our proposal...in part."

The press conference drew to a close when Mr. Tennaileau turned to the 10 press representatives in attendance, demanding to know "Why hasn't the press covered the FFA's demands?"

The Debt Moratorium Wave- Italy

July 3:

** The Milan regional secretary of Italy's largest farmers' organization, Coldiretti, told NSIPS that Coldiretti has called for a one-year moratorium on agricultural debt. Coldiretti's press release on the moratorium call was blacked out of the press. The Milan regional secretary also said that his organization has contacted the Socialist- and Communist-allied peasant organization Alleanza Contadini, as well as ten regional parliamentarians to work out a common call for a global moratorium on agricultural debt.

** The Mouvement de Défense des Exploitants Familiaux (MODEF), a French peasant union representing about 25 per cent of the farming population in France, called for postponement of all peasant debt, tax and social security payments until the end of the scheduled payments period.

** Ernesto Pucci, a member of the Directorate of the Christian Democratic Party, told NSIPS, "The next Italian government must call for a two to three year debt moratorium, otherwise there will be a disaster...Debt moratorium provides us with a breathing space during which we can go for high technological restructuring, especially in the export industry...There cannot be a reduction of consumption."

July 7:

** The Fédération Française de l'Agriculture (FFA), a conservative farmers' organization which represents about 8 per cent of the French farming population and is especially well implanted in the meat and dairy-producing areas of western France, demanded that all peasant loan repayments, tax and social security payments for the years 1976 and 1977 be assumed by the French government.

** At a meeting of the UDR Gaullist party's parliamentary group, French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac announced that his government would grant the French peasantry "a postponement of debt and tax payments in 1976." UDR deputy Charles Bignon, a close collaborator of former Gaullist Prime Minister Michel Debré, demanded that Chirac grant French farmers a 15-year low-interest 10 billion franc "green loan" in addition to the planned emergency subsidies and debt postponement measures.

July 9:

** At a meeting of Italy's municipal budget commissioners, Naples commissioner Scippa called for a one-year debt moratorium on the cities' debt. Meeting representatives of the European Labor Party outside, he commented, "We are taking your advice, we will pay nothing."

** UDR deputy Hector Rolland informed NSIPS in Paris that "my constituency is talking of nothing but debt moratorium." The same day, Rolland wrote an article for the evening daily France-Soir in which he announced "my definitive break with Prime Minister Chirac and President Giscard d'Estaing." Rolland was the first UDR deputy to bring his support to the presidential candidacy of Giscard in May-June 1974, and is usually regarded as the foremost spokesman of the UDR's right wing. He called on "new voices" to speak up against the present French government, which will represent "the real France."

** Italian Socialist Party directorate member Dragone stated at the Italian budget commissioners' meeting in Naples, "Debt service payments cannot be maintained at the expense of services."

** The CNJA, the French young farmers' organization, called for a postponement of all peasant debt, tax and social security payments in a press release.

** The state secretary in charge of food production in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, West Germany, announced at a press conference that his state's government has decided to grant a one-year moratorium on all peasant debt owed to state-run institutions.