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Russia 'Offered New Zealand Nuclear Sub' to Settle Dairy Debt in 1990s

By The Moscow Times

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Russia offered New Zealand MiG fighter jets, tanks, and a nuclear submarine in 1993 in an attempt to wipe out the $100-million debt it owed New Zealand for imports of its dairy products, a new book said.

In his book "Till The Cows Came Home," set for release in November, Clive Lind says that New Zealand's prime minister at the time, Jim Bolger, turned them down because of his country's nuclear-free stance.

Russian officials had suggested that instead of using the submarine for military purposes, New Zealand could hook it up to the national grid and use it as a power plant for a coastal city, The Guardian reported Tuesday.

Diplomatic and trade relations between Russia and New Zealand were established in 1944. The Soviet Union eventually became the fifth biggest importer of New Zealand's food

products. The country remained a major supplier of dairy and meat products to Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

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