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SPECIAL DELEGATION OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRIA TO THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
REGARDING THE
TEMELIN NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

c/o EMBASSY OF AUSTRIA
3524 International Court, N.W.
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Telephone (202) 895 6700
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March 8, 1994

Via Hand Delivery

Honorable Ivan Selin
Chairman
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
One White Flint North Building
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Re: Temelin Nuclear Power Project

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Special Delegation of the Government of Austria to the United States Regarding the Temelin Nuclear Power Plant ("Delegation"), this letter is to thank you for the opportunity afforded the Delegation to meet with you on February 18th.

The Government of Austria has a great regard for the expertise of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Therefore, as we proceed to study the Temelin Project, it is important to be clear on the precise extent of the U.S. NRC's reviews of the licensing authorities and process, and planned future actions regarding Temelin. We have attempted to summarize some of the points that you made. If our understanding is not correct, please let me know.

1. The primary role of the U.S. NRC has been (and will be) to advise on the adequacy of the Czech nuclear regulatory and licensing system and procedures, and to provide technical assistance to Czech nuclear regulators. You said you feel comfortable with the Czech procedures and regulatory system.

2. Since the U.S. NRC has never performed an analysis of the Temelin plant, the U.S. NRC has never said that Temelin meets U.S. safety and other licensing standards. However, the NRC has no reason to believe that the level of safety is below that of the United States.

The U.S. NRC has not been asked to advise on the technical and safety aspects of the Temelin project. This is not your responsibility nor within your authority. Therefore, the U.S. NRC had no reason to inquire about the adequacy of

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technical documents, or to assess whether the Temelin project meets Western safety standards.

3. The U.S. NRC had no reason to inquire as to the extent to which Soviet design information was available to the Czechs. You confirmed that there was no information available on the Probabilistic Safety Analysis ("PSA"). Nor does the U.S. NRC have information on the availability of replacement parts, etc. When we expressed our concern that there were no translations of the Soviet/Russian design codes available, you said that "It's even worse than that"

However, you stated you "feel comfortable" with the VVER-1000 reactor. In your answer to our question about U.S. NRC responsibilities, you stated that you would not feel responsible if there were an accident after two years of operation.

4. The U.S. NRC understands that adequate procedures are – or will be – in place in the Czech Republic, and that the Czech regulators are or will be capable. It is not the U.S. NRC's job to check whether the Czech regulators actually perform as provided for. (We note the statement in the February 28, 1994, NRC Fact Sheet on NRC Licensing Assistance for Czech Nuclear Plant: "In accordance with precedent and policy, neither the NRC nor INEL [a U.S. nuclear facility in Idaho, where training for the Czechs will be provided] will be responsible for safety decisions made by the Czech regulatory authority.")

5. If there has been an inspection report(s) of the adequacy of previous construction, the NRC has not seen the document(s).

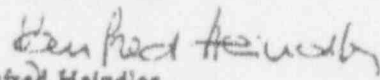
6. The NRC does not believe that the question of whether the Temelin Plant would be licensable in the United States is a relevant question. Licensing is part of the sovereign duty of the Czech Republic.

Once again, we appreciated the opportunity to meet with you. Should we have further questions we would appreciate if you would give us the opportunity for

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Further discussion of this Project, which, as you know, is of great importance to the Government and people of Austria and, of course, to many others.

Very Truly Yours,


Manfred Helndler
on behalf of
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cc: Carol F. Lee
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