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AIR POUCH

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FROM: AMEMBASSY, VIENNA

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

July 9, 1952

REF: Embassy's Despatch No. 1525, March 24, 1952.

SUBJECT: EXCON - RFD 5216-J, Technische Hochschule, Vienna

The Embassy invites the Department's attention to the fact that action on OIT Cases No. 2682305 and No. 2682342 on RFD 5216-J are held up pending further review by OIT, Washington. Additional information has now been furnished by the Technische Hochschule, Vienna, which may assist in processing the two cases in question.

The following letter was submitted to the Embassy on June 23, 1952 by Dr. Hans Hohn, head of the Institute for Inorganic Chemistry at the Technische Hochschule, Vienna VI (French Sector):

"I received news through the Austrian Legation in Washington that the responsible gentlemen in OIT and the Security Committee will not accept the responsibility for the shipment of the above-mentioned spectrographic equipment to Vienna. Therefore, the export license has still not been granted by Mr. Frederick Strauss, director of the West-European Division.

"I now ask that you forward the following explanation of the affair to Mr. Frederick Strauss:

"1) The proposal voiced by these officials, who perhaps are not entirely familiar with the situation, to erect the spectrographic installation in Graz or Leoben instead of Vienna is impossible to carry out. It would require an entire relocation of my institute to these cities since the spectrographic equipment will be used in conjunction with my entire research program.

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"2) I would like to call your attention to the fact that my institute is neither situated in the Russian Zone nor in the International Zone. I shall assume the responsibility to see that this spectrographic installation is erected in my institute and that it remains under my direct control. I would like to call your attention to the fact that a complete, modern American structural analysis installation from Philips was recently installed in the institute through American aid. Other institutes of the Vienna Hochschule have recently received scientific equipment from the United States which is at least as highly developed as the spectrograph which has been ordered.

*address of
in book*

"This will also serve to testify for the fact that since the end of the war the institutes of the Hochschule have never been controlled or in any manner influenced or inspected by a foreign element.

not heard of

"3) In regard to the installation of the spectrographic equipment in my institute, I hereby declare that it shall be installed in an entirely closed room to which, outside of myself, only the following assistants will have access: a) Dr. Lihl, b) Dr. E. Fetzner, and c) Dr. O. Schlager. I have known the persons named for years as being oriented toward the West. Not one of the named has ever had a connection with an Eastern country or has striven to attain such. It is to my own interest that no other person outside of the named will have access to the precision equipment, due to the possibility of damage to the apparatus. If it becomes necessary to enlarge the circle of scientists working with this precision equipment at the Institute, then permission will be requested from the proper American office in Vienna. I should like to add that other professors or personnel of the Technische Hochschule in Vienna will not have either the right or the opportunity to enter the room of the spectrographic installation without my permission.

inaccessible

"4) I have been employed as consultant for the Central Office for ERP affairs for years and am known by a number of gentlemen of the Mission, both personally and through deeds. It is obvious that persons such as

I, who occupy a position of trust with the ERP Organization, cannot in any manner be affiliated with a group or political interest which is unfriendly toward the interests of the United States. I am including a statement from the Director of the ERP central office, Minister Dr. Taucher. I am ready to obtain a character reference from any other public figure, as far as I am well known to them; for example, from the Minister of Education. I am willing to assume the full responsibility to see that it shall be impossible to divulge any information about the scientific and technical details of the equipment. I further declare that I will assume the full responsibility in the event of a political emergency to see that the installation is at once rendered useless through the destruction of key parts or through similar action. I am entirely willing to have the spherical grid, the most important part of the apparatus, remain as property of the American Embassy or MEC and to borrow the part on condition that we turn it over to one of these organizations in case of political difficulties. This type of grid can only be manufactured by a few highly specialized firms and a spectrograph without a grid would be useless and entirely worthless. If a country is in a position to manufacture such a grid, then it is certainly able to produce the entire apparatus. However, I would like to state that the difficult method of production and the necessary machinery which it would require to manufacture this type of grid could not be calculated from the finished grid alone.

"5) In conclusion, I would like to again reiterate that by shipping the badly needed spectrographic equipment to my institute, damage to the interests of the United States can be contemplated a) due to the personnel of the institute, and b) due to the simple procedure for rendering the equipment useless.

"signed: Dr. Hans Hohn"

In conjunction with the foregoing, the following is the text of a letter presented to the Embassy on June 23, 1952 by Dr. Taucher, head of the ERP Central Office:

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"The undersigned states that Dr. Hans Hohn has been active for years as a consultant for chemical projects of the Central Office for ERP Affairs. He has the full trust of the undersigned. His observations and advice have always proven to be worthwhile and accurate. Therefore, Professor Hohn's letter of June 19, 1952 to Mr. Olson in regard to case nos. 2682305 and 2682342 for spectrographic equipment can be accepted with full assurance of its accuracy.

"Sincerely,

(signed) Dr. Taucher"

For the High Commissioner:

/s/

Ben H. Thibodeaux

Counselor of Embassy for Economic Affairs

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