

ANALYZING POLICY FORMULATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC: THE CASES
OF TEMELIN (NUCLEAR POWER) AND EU ACCESSION

Presented to the 11th Annual Conference of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public
Administration in Central and Eastern Europe, Bucharest, Romania, April 9-12, 2003

By:

Donald E. Fuller, Ph.D.
Visiting Professor
Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences
Comenius University
Bratislava, Slovakia
donaldfuller_99@yahoo.com

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Donald Fuller, Ph.D.
Visiting Professor
Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences
Comenius University
Bratislava, Slovakia

ABSTRACT. The paper examines two public policy issues (Temelin, a nuclear power plant; and EU accession) in the Czech Republic. The purpose of the examination is to isolate and describe actors and/or institutions having policy input upon two important policy issues in order to detail the amount and valence of the influence and the subsequent outcome that, in these two cases, is premature. Despite the pending resolution of both cases sufficient time has elapsed to track interested actors/institutions that have exerted influence on the public policy process. Using secondary sources, the paper concludes that, in addition to substantive policy input from interested parties, there exists a policy *process* which is extant in the Czech Republic and that may have application in other postcommunist countries. Nevertheless, two policy issues do not prove causation. The paper describes the process and substantive input so that it may be compared with similar papers examining policy inputs in other countries. While the Czech case might be indigenous, it is part of a wider research model and project that should shed further light on the policy influence of outside actors and institutions.

PROBLEM. While the public policy process certainly involves elected politicians and subordinate bureaucracies (the politico-administrative mix), it is typically apparent that outside actors and institutions have policy interests expressed either through the formal legislative hearing process, the 'informal' interactive public/private process, or overt activities such as public demonstrations. The media can be considered an important policy influence in its news and editorial reporting. In certain cases, practices such as referenda may test the strength and volume of public concern for public policy issues. Despite an inchoate collection of influences which may vary by issue and in its intensity and size, there are few guides for identifying the strength of outside 'lobbying' activity nor is the link clear between such inputs and the ultimate outcome. Many policy issues may continue indefinitely (such as abortion or euthanasia) though certain policy decisions may exist for interim periods, waxing and waning (that is, political mixes and interactions with outside actors/institutions may change over time). This paper seeks to

evaluate the process and substance of input at a point in 2003 that lies short of ultimate outcome. It is believed that in selecting two issues of fundamental importance to the Czech Republic, the potential for attracting significant input is sufficient to demonstrate preliminarily, who, what and how such outside policy input coalesces.

1.0.The Policy Issues. The Temelin nuclear reactor has excited substantial interest both inside the Czech Republic and among its neighboring states. Temelin is situated on the border with Austria yet effects of a nuclear disaster would be felt in Germany and other bordering countries.¹ Both Austria and Germany have expressed concern.² Temelin is based upon Chernobyl technology although the Czechs argue that sufficient safeguards exist to protect the public against potential hazard. The European Union (EU), to which the Czech Republic is being considered for accession, has determined that Temelin is an “upgradable” station that should, in theory, permit it to operate. The EU has commented somewhat unfavorably about the Czech power station though there is no indication that EU accession will be contingent upon modifications or elimination of Temelin.³

2.0 European accession, while likely for the Czech Republic, has not been supported by an overwhelming number of Czechs and, on occasion, neighboring EU countries, wishing to raise the Temelin issue, have threatened potential veto of Czech accession.⁴ Such threats have arisen during domestic elections in Austria and

¹ Temelin is situated 60 kilometers from Austria and Bavaria(Germany).

² The Environmentalist Democrats (OeDP), a small party in Bavaria, Germany, threatened on March 5, 2003, to boycott its own energy company (E.ON) for allegedly not keeping its promise to refrain from buying energy from Temelin. The belief existed that energy was being distributed within the Bavarian electricity grid. The protest originated in Passau, near the Czech border. Alleging that the Passau Municipal Assembly “...Shamelessly despises citizens...” a request (demand might be closer) was made for the municipality to cease buying energy from E.ON if it makes purchases from Temelin (through CEZ, the Czech power authority). “Environmentalists Threaten to Boycott E.ON due to Temelin,” *Ceske Noviny*, March 6, 2003, www.ceskenoviny.cz.

³ Temelin consists of “... two VVER-981V320 generators, each with a capacity of 890-MW. The first reactor was connected to the national grid in December, 2000, but was shut down in May , 2001, because of circuit and turbine problems and remained closed to allow an EU inspection team time to assess the plant’s safety. In August, 2001, the EU inspection team found some minor flaws that could be remedied but declared the plant safe. The first reactor was restarted but shut down again within a week due to technical problems. Workers claimed that the technical problems were not associated with the reactors, hence the plant was safe...When the plant is fully operative it will provide over 20% of the Czech Republic’s power needs.” “North Central Europe,” *Country Analysis Brief*, Energy Information Administration, March 2002, www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/visegrad.html

⁴ Germany has, as well, raised the issue of the Benes Decrees. To make a very long story short: by decree of then President Benes (of Czechoslovakia), some 2.5 million ethnic Germans were deported from Czechoslovakia after World War Two and their property was confiscated. Though the issue was raised several times, Guenther Verheugen, EU Enlargement Commissioner, has said that the decrees would not be a condition of EU accession (if for no other reason than Czechoslovakia no longer exists). However, the issue has not died and the Czech parliament seems *slightly* more inclined to issue, at least, an apology (most Czech politicians have even declined to do this; the possibility of financial reparations would cause severe negativism among those present in Czechoslovakia during the German WWII occupation). In March, 2003, Bernd Posselt, Sudeten German Landsmannschaft leader insisted on the abolition of the decrees and believes that „they do not belong in Europe.” Further, he indicated “...it would be difficult for him to support the Czech Republic’s entry to the EU due to the Benes decrees, although he considered

Germany and have subsided from time to time at the formal state level. Civic groups, particularly those located near Temelin in or outside the Czech Republic have demonstrated against continuation of the station. The Czech government has from time to time closed the station for maintenance and repair.⁵ It has not been fully commissioned to operate within its capacity since its initiation by the former government of Czechoslovakia prior to 1989.⁶

- 2.1 EU accession has been much in the news. The Czech Republic was formally invited (with several other countries) on October 9, 2002 to accede. A referendum is planned (an EU requirement). Accession to the EU has generally been poorly understood by publics in the Czech Republic as well as many of the acceding countries. The Czech Republic is part of the Visegrad Four (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia). These countries have discussed their accession strategies and have attempted to speak as a group before the EU when it was to their advantage. Despite this, programs such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) seemed particularly unfavorable to Poland in view of its large agricultural sector (40% of the labor force). As a group, however, lowered economic subsidies promised to them (as opposed to existing members) angered the Visegrad Four, leaving them politically vulnerable at home.⁷

3.0 The Analytic Model: for examining the two policy issues is offered below, however, the following assumptions affect the dynamics of the two policy issues:

- a. It is assumed that the government itself has an interest in acceding to the EU for political reasons primarily due to perceived economic advantage, increased acceptance into Europe (as opposed to being labeled as outside Europe as historically western historians, politicians and others had so labeled them, causing a new term to emerge: Central Europe, so that countries such as the Visegrad Four could detach themselves from “Eastern” Europe, a more pejorative term in fashion among eastern “bashers.”), perceived freedom for its citizens to travel easily (without visas), and general security expectations as well as greater voice in world affairs since the new EU’s 300 million citizens have significant market strength as well as political voice in international affairs.
- b. It is assumed also that the Temelin nuclear power plant offers the usual

it inevitable.” This paper assumes that the issue will not prevent EU accession but that *some* type of conciliatory gesture from the Czech parliament is not completely impossible. “Posselt Continues to Insist on Repelling of Benes Decrees,” *Ceske Noviny*, March 25, 2003, www.ceskenoviny.cz/view-id.php4?id-20030325F01564.

⁵ The second reactor (which had a ‘start-up’ in June, 2002) was closed, for example, on March 6, 2003, “...Due to a leakage in the non-nuclear part...” “Czech Republic: Temelin’s Second Reactor Temporarily Shut Down,” *CEE News*, March 7, 2003, www.bluebull.com.

⁶ The second reactor was restarted on April 2, 2003. Tests were in place to evaluate the system’s ability to reduce output or shut down when components are intentionally disconnected. Trial testing was planned to last for the ensuing 18 months. “Reactor of Temelin’s 2nd Unit Supplies Power to Grid Again,” *Ceske Noviny*, April 2, 2003, www.ceskenoviny.cz.

⁷ A European Parliament committee approved the expansion plans for all ten candidate countries, stating that “...(We) are sure that the Parliament will act similarly in plenary session on April 9 (2004).” “Ten EU Candidates Clear a Membership Hurdle,” *International Herald Tribune*, March 20, 2003.

economic advantages vs. hydrocarbon power (obviously externalities may not be fully recoverable in Temelin's economic advantage) even though potential does exist for accident or even disaster. Naturally, the disposition of toxic waste is a second challenge in operating the reactor. Lacking sufficient natural gas, oil, and hydro-electric power (though there is some) and, seemingly, with limited wind and solar power (though bordering Austria uses limited wind power) the Czech government seems faced with the option of returning to coal power (in which it has high unemployment) and facing daily pollution vs. the potential for a nuclear explosion. While various groups have an interest in shutting down the plant, others, such as Westinghouse, the plant engineer and technical administrator, have interests in heightening its security to the highest level and providing low cost (with or without externalities) electricity to Czech customers. This paper cannot resolve the substantive question of yes or no or, conceivably, finding an alternative such as hydrogen. The paper will deal with the force fields of interest groups having an interest in maintaining Temelin or shutting it down. In the process, we will search for any indication that the government prefers the status quo, for the moment, (the Czech government has sought to privatize electrical energy, thus, perhaps, hoping that the liability problem will transfer to the private entity; thus far, no sale has occurred) and is simply stalling to pass on the problem to the future. There has been no public statement suggesting that the government intends to close the reactor.

- c. Lacking any useful apparent alternative to Temelin, it is assumed that unless the EU were to deny EU accession to the Czech Republic in the absence of eliminating Temelin, the government will maintain the *status quo* and live up to its agreement with Austria (Melk Agreement) which provides for enhanced security provisions.

4.0 Policy Analytic Model

- . The policy model for analyzing the two policy issues includes the following components:
 - a. The problem
 - b. The issues
 - c. The stakeholders
 - d. The options/alternatives
 - e. Analysis
 - f. Conclusion

4.1. The Policy Problems

The policy problems center upon whether or not the Czech government should eliminate the Temelin nuclear power plant or satisfy itself that security provisions are sufficient to justify continuance of its operation; and,

whether or not the Czech Republic should join the European Union.

4.2. Issues in the Temelin Case

- a. Potential danger of a nuclear accident or explosion and subsequent harm to nearby populations both within and outside the Czech Republic
- b. Extent to which alternative power sources can be utilized to substitute for Temelin and which do not offer continual polluting effects as opposed to a potentially disastrous explosion⁸
- c. Finding a cost which will include externalities for whatever source is chosen at rates which the public will tolerate.
- d. Either purchasing power from another country or purchasing natural gas externally while minimizing the polluting effects of thermal power plants
- e. Reneging on a contract with Westinghouse that is responsible for technically managing Temelin
- f. Continue poor relations with neighboring countries, two of which could veto EU accession for the Czech Republic (The EU has not made accession of the Czech Republic conditional on eliminating Temelin)

4.3. Stakeholders

1. The Czech Government

The Czech government appears to be lying low. Despite occasional demonstrations against Temelin, and despite occasional outbursts from Austrian politicians such as Jorg Haider (largely confined to the November, 2002 election), the Temelin issue has somewhat subsided. Notwithstanding less media attention, the Czech government may simply be waiting out the situation. In the absence of further demonstrations particularly along the Czech-Austrian border, the government has not raised the issue (though the government has conspicuously reported shut downs for maintenance and testing, indicating responsiveness to safety considerations, (see footnotes above). Governments in many policy deliberations first surface the issue and then evaluate the response. In other issues, more similar to Temelin, demonstrations often raise public awareness and governments may simply wait out the storm. This seems to be the response of the Czech government. The urgency surrounding Temelin has not necessarily hardened. The government has on several occasions closed the station totally or partially for maintenance. Thus, the impression created was that the government was mindful of safety and acting. Very little has been newsworthy recently (the following

⁸ Electricity production in the Czech Republic is 78% fossil fuel, 3% hydro, 19% nuclear, and 1% other, www.cia.gov/ciapublications/factbook/geos/ez.html.

paragraph describes “social movements”). Certainly the Government follows its EU evaluations and will comply as necessary with EU prescriptions.⁹

2. NGOs and Other Social Movements.

The “anti-Temelin” movement has included NGOs, politicians and other supporters. Early NGOs included the Rainbow Movement (Hnutí DUHA), later to become part of the Friends of the Earth International, and Children of the Earth (Deti Zeme). Politicians expressing concern about Temelin included (former) President Vaclav Havel, former Czech premier Petr Pithart and his former deputy, Jan Strasky. Former environmental ministers Ivan Dejmál and Josef Vavroušek also were opposed to nuclear energy. Other local organizations appeared: South Bohemian mothers (Jihoceske matky) and Calla. Yet, Hnutí DUHA became the primary organizer resulting in annual “blockades” at Temelin.¹⁰ At the same time, Austrian groups participated as well. A Czech-Austrian organization, Civilian Environmental Initiative (OIZP) was formed in Ceske Budejovice, Czech Republic. A “coalition” of groups continued participation during the 1990s. Nevertheless, the Melk Agreement, November 29, 2001, signed by Austrian Chancellor Schuessel and Czech Prime Minister Zeman, agreed upon seven safety issues to be investigated and reconciled.¹¹ Following this agreement, and in subsequent months, active demonstrations became less intense. A blockade, November 30, 2002, by the Lower Austrian branch of the Stop Temelin group terminated a half hour blockade at Temelin. On April 17, 2003, a protest fast of four anti-nuclear activists, against Temelin, occurring outside the Austrian Chancellor’s office in Vienna terminated in the absence of a “desirable result.”¹² Promising to continue applying pressure, The Salzburg Platform Against Nuclear Danger asserted the possibility of filing lawsuits against Temelin.¹³ Thus, to some extent the Austrian activists have continued the protest that have “numbed” the Czech participants.

3.0 Labor Unions

⁹ Austrian Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel commented in Prague on April 2, 2003, that “...Czech-Austrian relations are excellent and that the planned EU enlargement next year would be the fulfillment of his dream.” “Czech-Austrian Relations Excellent – Schuessel,” *Ceske Noviny*, April 2, 2003, www.ceskenoviny.cz.

¹⁰ See *WISE News Communiqué*, “‘Anti-Nuclear’ Means ‘Anti-Temelin,’” October 20, 2000, www.global2000.at.

¹¹ See *WISE News Communiqué*, “Temelin Agreement: Austrian Government Coalition Remains Divided,” December 7, 2001, www.global2000.at.

¹² *Ceske Noviny*, “Anti-Temelin Hunger Strikes End without Much Success,” April 17, 2003, www.ceskenoviny.cz.

¹³ *Ibid.*

- a. Unions in nuclear plants (CEZ unionists) declared a strike alert on February 12, 2003, in protest against job cuts and breaches of the collective agreement concerning the wage rise.¹⁴ The unions favored a priority against job trimming in the tradeoff against wage improvement.¹⁵ Unions have thus, been concerned with job reductions in their discussions with management as well as the Ministries of Industry and Trade and of Finance.
- b. Unions in postcommunist countries have tended toward a “tripartite” arrangement (mutual discussions among the government, business and unions).¹⁶ Thus, the typical activism found in many market economies seems to be developing slowly. To some extent, while it might be possible to argue a postcommunist “hangover” from communist days, there are indications, particularly in Hungary that union discussions have concentrated on direct contact in the political arena as opposed to overt demonstrations or strike activity. Nevertheless, Russia has demonstrated its assertiveness in striking against wage arrears, Slovakia has recently struck against the Slovakian railways, and the Czech unions in Temelin and elsewhere associated with the electrical industry indicate a growing willingness to challenge the government and/or public corporations. Naturally, government ownership in postcommunist countries typically exceeds that in purer market economies, particularly in full or partial monopolies such as telephone, electricity, natural gas and telecommunications. Lately, the primary concerns have been wage levels and job security. Management has attempted to pare inefficiencies of public subsidies and reduction of railway lines (Slovakia) that directly affect the public as well as scaled back workers’ wages. Strikes at Temelin (assumedly not endangering the nuclear configuration) have been associated with a larger unhappiness among electrical energy workers.
- c. Westinghouse, Temelin’s technical manager, originally won out in bidding that was somewhat controversial. Having first come in with a higher bid, it was alleged that, thanks to insider information, the company resubmitted a lower bid that gained

¹⁴ “Unions not to Expand Strike Alert beyond Dukovany, Temelin,” *Ceske Noviny*, 2-20-03, www.ceskenoviny.cz.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Myant, Slocock and Smith conclude that an increase in trade union influence on decision making, would depend upon achieving an enhanced consultative mechanism. “Such a trend could be disrupted by a government unwilling to listen to other views and by a union movement tempted into seeking a more grandiose role for tripartism. . . In the words of the chairman of the Czech miners’ union, ‘the system that we have is perfect, but is no use at all if there is no will to negotiate.’” Martin Myant, Brian Slocock, and Simon Smith, “Tripartism in the Czech and Slovak Republics,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, June 2000, vol, 52, issue 4, www.

it the management contract. It did not escape the media that a member of the CEZ (national Czech electrical board) was Vaclav Klaus's wife (the former is now president of the Czech Republic) who allegedly leaked the bidding situation to Westinghouse.

d. The Czech government has given indications that Temelin has attracted its attention when necessary, i.e., when confronted by interest group activity. Nevertheless, having signed the Melk Agreement with Austria that strengthened safety safeguards it has generally met the requirements of the EU technical requirements. Absence of any greater attention or debate on the Temelin subject may indicate the government's preoccupation with the elective process (both the razor thin majority in parliament and the frustrating election of a new president which required numerous balloting: three official ones) and/or priority issues such as negotiating final EU Common Agricultural Policy subsidies or the negotiations regarding the war in Iraq. That being said, the government seems to be playing a waiting game, coalition politics or not, and, unless Temelin becomes a key issue in EU accession, it is likely to maintain necessary safety requirements and place an agenda for a new power grid into the future.

4.5.2. EU Accession Issues

- a. EU accession came to a preliminary conclusion in October, 2002. The EU formally invited the Czech Republic (and nine others) to seek final accession. This invitation constituted an EU decision that coalesced arguments both *pro and con* with respect to EU admission. In its final summary of the Czech Republic's status, the EU essentially stated that the country had satisfied the *basic* requirements of the Maastricht Treaty, the most compelling EU treaty, which laid out the political, economic and social requirements for acceding members. Having agreed that the Czech Republic had met the basic requirements, the EU repeated, in the softest tones to date, that it needed to continue work in improving the civil service, Roma rights, and, in particular, to address continuing evidence of corruption of government officials.¹⁷ In essence, this constituted work that would have to be performed prior to admission, yet conditions were not imposed.
- b. While Czechs, in general, had shown either apathy or ignorance toward EU accession, the Czech government had

¹⁷ See http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/cz_en.pdf.

proceeded on the assumption that the public would support accession at the time of a referendum (to be held in June, 2003). Polls taken in March, 2003, suggested that the public was moving toward a 80% agreement level, much above earlier poll results.¹⁸ Perhaps, the high publicity level of CAP debate among the Visegrad Four and the personal attention of Prime Minister Spidla as well as the public statements of former President Havel, had strengthened a positive public trend. Vaclav Klaus, the new Czech President (Czechs have a parliamentary model with limited power allocated to the president as opposed to the prime minister) has been a 'Euro-skeptic' and is likely less gratuitous publicly than Havel. Nevertheless, he must exert his influence outside the formal position of the Czech government and is more likely to represent the views of the public even if occasionally pushing for increased EU benefits for the country. While the agricultural sector, primarily the farmers, has protested the reduced CAP subsidies offered by the EU, agriculture constitutes only about 10% of the Czech economy. Farmers demonstrated publicly, particularly during the period just prior to the official October invitation and the EU responded to final negotiations by offering a slightly more enlarged subsidy package. The general public is not likely to vote negatively in response to the lower CAP figures. The public is far more critical of NATO (of which it is a member) and, particularly, of its modest involvement (chemical analysis teams) with the war in Iraq.

c. The Czech government has hired a public relations firm to manage publicity about the EU accession prior to the referendum. There is some concern expressed by Euro-skeptics that their opinions will not receive government support during the general informational campaign. The campaign will spell out the advantages and disadvantages in an attempt to consummate a positive referendum outcome.¹⁹ The Euro-skeptics may or may not be persuasive yet they have allies in the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the former party of President Klaus (who must officially now be non-partisan in his representation of the Czech Republic). As the referenda approach throughout the four Visegrad Four countries a slow "yes" consensus seems building

¹⁸ "Almost 80% of Czechs Ready to Support EU Entry," *Prague Business Journal*, March 6, 2003, www.pbj.cz.

¹⁹ Such programs have been labeled as "advertorials." The Czech broadcasting act, amended in 2001, allows stations to broadcast sponsored programs, but only if they are clearly labeled as such. Broadcasters are forbidden to air sponsored news and political programs. Despite this, certain TV stations have provided coverage of EU enlargement (not sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). "Government Seeks TV Nova Support for EU Vote," *Prague Business Journal*, March 24, 2003, www.pbj.cz/user/article.asp?ArticleID=174973.

among the four publics. If nothing else, President Chirac of France drew the ten aspiring accession countries slightly together when he castigated them for favoring the US-UK resolution in favor of disarming Iraq by force.²⁰ The primary interest group favoring EU accession has probably been the government.²¹ While the public has been largely apathetic with respect toward political and policy issues, the prospect of joining the EU has not been fully understood. To some extent, having shaken off the umbrella of the soviet bloc, the Czech Republic was not quite ready to join another bloc even though this would seem to benefit the country. Having first faced the Germans and then the Communists, the Czechs might have preferred to quietly live out their lives without being asked to participate in a 'union' of still another group. Yet, both the 'Old' and 'New' Europe appellations which emerged (through the words of U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld) seemed to shake many in Central Europe out of their lethargy. Followed quickly by Chirac's outburst, the Visegrad Four, led, to some extent by Prime Minister Miller of Poland, voiced alarm that the 'new' accession countries were in some way viewed as having limited rights of self expression. Though Chirac could hardly have intended such a consequence, Central Europe seemed ready to shake off its centuries' old label of 'others' so frequently ascribed to them by western Europeans.

5. The substantive case for EU membership may have more to do with politics than economics.²² The Czech Republic is well situated in Central Europe to serve as a conduit for both politics and economics between western and eastern Europe. Automakers such as VW (joining with Skoda) and Peugeot in Slovakia as well as other transnational firms, particularly banks, have already settled themselves in the country. While such activities had little to do with the EU, labor markets and local expertise contributed

²⁰ Said Chirac, "These countries have been not very well behaved and rather reckless of the danger of aligning themselves too rapidly with the American position. They missed a great opportunity to shut up." His reference was to ten countries in central and eastern Europe (potential EU candidates as well) that had supported the United States in arguing for forcefully disarming Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction (assuming they existed). The Czech Republic was a signer of the letter in support of the U.S. "Chirac Angers East Europe," *International Herald Tribune*, February 19, 2003, pp. 1, 4.

²¹ Regional and local government have already challenged the national government for apparently planning to co-locate national ministry offices in regions in order to "create a national program for winning the EU funds." The Prague mayor opined, "...The government still has not realized that in practice financial resources from the European budget will mostly be directed to regions and municipalities... In order for these resources to get there, regions and towns must be prepared for this, and they are not at the moment." "Regions Fight Government for Role in EU Funding," *Prague Business Journal*, March 24, 2003, www.pbj.cz/user/article.asp?ArticleID=174974.

²² However, trade between the Czech Republic and the EU countries has grown steadily since 1990, when it turned to a positive balance. Frantisek Turnovec, "The Czech Republic on its Way to the European Union," *Working Paper no. 6*, Univerzita Karlova, Fakulta socialnich ved, Institute ekonmockych studii, 2001, <http://ies.fsv.cuni.cz>.

to trans-border investment. The likelihood that the country will accede to the EU makes more such movements likely in view of EU standards and requirements affecting trade, competition, product standards, law, and stockholder protection in the Czech Republic. Assuming the Czechs join the Euro zone, costs of doing business will be reduced. The paper cannot analyze the full range of economic pluses and minuses. Whether or not the EU becomes a supranational government is also beyond the scope of the paper. Politically, however, each country bordering on the Czech Republic is or will be a EU member with the exception of Ukraine. Ukraine and the Balkan countries seem likely to join in the future. The Czech Republic does not have the partially isolated geopolitical location of Switzerland (not a EU member). The country is at the cross roads of important neighbors with which it regularly trades and interacts politically. The Czechs can well afford to participate in the EU 'Club' that will represent a political and economic force of 300 million persons.

4.5.3. EU Stakeholders

1. The Czech Government. As described above, the Czech government supports EU accession, with the partial skepticism of its current president, Vaclav Klaus. Despite that, both Klaus and Prime Minister Spidla signed a treaty on April 16, 2003, to join the EU, subject only to agreement by a Czech referendum in June, 2003. While Klaus had been a 'euro-skeptic,' he seemed now to consider the accession to be inevitable. Jan Urban observed that his conversion to a 'yes' vote provides "...A strong boost to the 'yes' camp ahead of the referendum...since the 'no' camp thus lost its primary symbol and voice of 'Euro-skepticism.'²³ Interestingly, the occasion permitted French Pres. Chirac to moderate his earlier disparaging remarks regarding the 'pro-Iraq war letter signed by the newly joining states to the EU. Said Chirac, "A wonderful dream is coming true...For nearly 50 years, the heart of our continent was split between democracy and dictatorships in a balance of terror. The fracture that started in Europe spread across the entire planet."²⁴ (the Iraq war was essentially over at this moment, permitting an opportunity for Europe and the EU to shift the agenda to post-war construction rather than war hostility).
2. A *Euroskeptik* group has formed and has proposed to the government that funds be set aside to elucidate the pitfalls of joining the EU, namely, "...Policies they say endanger democracy, state sovereignty

²³ Jan Urban, "The Making of a Czech President," *RFE/RL East European Perspectives*, April 16, 2003, Vol. 5, Number 8, www.rfe/rl.org.

²⁴ *International Herald Tribune*, "10 Countries Sign Treaties to Join EU: Current Members seek to Bridge Rifts," April 17, 2003, p. 8. See fn. 19, for Chirac's earlier remarks.

and ecological stability.”²⁵ Yet, with the exception of Klaus, Czech officials have not ostensibly opposed joining the EU. In addition to those of the *Euroskeptic* group, the National Party, “...for whom the EU referendum is the main focus of activity this year...(has stated that)...The government should fund anti-EU campaigns to ensure an objective debate. We are not totally against the EU accession, but just try to create conditions for listening to both pro- and anti- EU voices.”²⁶ Czech Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda asserted, “...The government plans to give the people as much information as possible so they can make up their own minds about EU membership.”²⁷

4.5.4. Options/Alternatives

1. The EU wants to increase the share of renewable energy resources use in total primary energy resources to 12% in 2010.²⁸ Assumedly, the Czech government will have to search for reasonable alternatives in the near future. Coal is the most abundant energy source and is situated in lower Silesia (the upper or northern part of the region is in Poland). The region has high unemployment on both sides of the Czech-Polish border. Yet, returning to coal fired plants would, with existing known technology, significantly pollute the air. Few people want to return to the days of East Germany during which the air was heavily polluted (though much of this use of coal was to produce steel).
2. Natural gas is not sufficient to produce energy in the Czech Republic and would need to be imported. While this is a possibility, the cost of importing gas would need to be calculated (most likely from Russia). There is some pollution from gas but hardly the amount associated with coal.
3. Wind and solar power have not been utilized in the Czech Republic though neighboring Austria has limited use (limited essentially only by the wind; there is no solar energy produced, assumedly due to the climate which would preclude its generation for large portions of the year). While Eurasia might well be suitable for generation of solar power, there has been no serious discussion of its generation, possibly due to the presence of natural gas generally in the region. The Czech Republic has neither natural gas nor solar power in sufficient quantity.
4. Other solutions such as the extraction of nitrogen are conceivable in the future yet this would be a worldwide solution not limited to the Czech Republic. No one is quite sure about cost figures from

²⁵ *The Prague Post*, “EU Skeptics Seek ‘Balanced’ Debate,” December 10, 2002, www.praguepost.com.

²⁶ *Prague Business Journal*, “Ad Companies Await Referendum Bonanza, NGOs Kept on Hold,” February 14, 2003, www.pbj.cz.

²⁷ *Prague Post*, December 4, 2002, *op cit*.

²⁸ “Greater Use of Renewable Energy Resources Needs More Finances,” *Hospodarske Noviny*, April 3, 2002, <http://www.hnonline.sk>. At present the Czech Republic generates 3% of its electricity in hydro power and 1% in other sources. See fn. 8.

separating nitrogen from oxygen (using water, primarily from the sea) and transporting it to users.

5. Hydro-electric power generation is limited in the Czech Republic to mountainous areas which cannot supply more than a portion of the power grid. Conceivably alpine countries could expand their generation of hydro-electric power, possibly even for export, yet the thought of damming significant spaces in the Alps would certainly anger nature lovers and the tourist business, to say nothing of the local residents.
6. The Czech Republic (and others) will be forced into creating a power grid that combines natural gas, wind, solar and hydro-electric sources to gradually reduce its nuclear and fossil fuel energy generation. Certain rivers such as the Rhine, Danube and Vltava, that disrupted Europe by flooding in August, 2002, might be candidates for limited damming yet river transport as well as the aforementioned nature and tourist interests would certainly limit this possibility. Thus, assumedly, imported gas would have to make up the gap in the grid in lieu of a breakthrough with hydrogen or some other source. The use of energy, worldwide, has placed exorbitant demands on available resources (one of the reasons for nuclear power). The State of California was recently at the edge of a complete power failure (one wonders about the effect of the Silicon Valley's continuing appetite for energy). A reduction in demand for electricity such as by utilizing light emitting diodes (LEDs)²⁹ for lighting would certainly relieve energy starved machines and appliances that have captured the world.

4.5 Analysis. To some extent, social capital has pertinence for both policy issues. Distinctively, however, social capital³⁰ must be viewed through the prism of postcommunism. Putnam stressed the contribution of civic engagement to the political process.³¹ What is important is to reflect on postcommunist countries without chastising them for minimal civic engagement, as causative as that might seem to Putnam. Dowley and Silver have concentrated on an analysis of "Social Capital, Ethnicity and Support for Democracy in the Post-Communist States," and included the Czech Republic in the analysis.³² Reflecting on World Values Surveys of Freedom House, Dowley and Silver looked at several dimensions of democratization and social capital while constructing their own variable

²⁹ Barnaby J. Feder, "The Fade-Out of the Light Bulb," *International Herald Tribune*, 2-12-03, pp. 1,4.

³⁰ Putnam referred to 'social capital' as "features of social organization such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action." Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, (Princeton University Press, 1993).

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Kathleen M. Dowley and Brian D. Silver, *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 54, No. 4, 2002, 505-527.

of participation in voluntary organizations.³³ This paper believes that these data have relevance for analyzing the Czechs' propensity for participating in Temelin public activities and to a lesser extent to actively campaigning for EU accession (a referendum is scheduled for June, 2003, which will capture, at least, the official vote of the public). Interestingly, during discussions prior to EU accession in Poland, one delegate commented, "...If you did a secret ballot, 90% would say yes (to EU accession); yet, "...In public, the farmers don't want to be seen as capitulating to sinister forces from Brussels who are thought to be paving the way for a German conquest-by-checkbook."³⁴

- 4.5.1. Encapsulating measures from the World Values Survey such as 'How interested would you say you are in politics?' 'Participation in voluntary organizations,' and social trust as measured by 'Generally speaking, would you say most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people,' Dowley and Silver concluded that "Social capital is not correlated with democratization in these post-communist countries (Czechs were included)." In fact, they found that "...Mean levels of social trust and organizational membership are consistently *negatively* related to levels of overall democratization across the 20 post-communist countries."³⁵
- 4.5.2. Dowley and Silver analyzed a second set of descriptors bearing upon 'regime performance,' 'democratic principle' and 'political institutions.' Again, they found "...No statistically significant relationships between social capital and aggregate confidence in or satisfaction with democratic institutions...Social capital does not seem to contribute to democratic development, since without a correlation, the former cannot be even a partial cause of the latter."³⁶
- 4.5.3. Dowley and Silver postulated that minority populations would typically report lower levels of pride in the country and that ethnic pluralism might capture support for the political community.³⁷ The Czech data were taken, however, when Czechoslovakia existed, thus placing the Slovaks as the minority (in which there would, of course, have been some Romas, as there would have been within the Czech portion of the country). Interestingly, both the Czechs and Slovaks exhibited a negative response to the question of pride in the country (the Czechs slightly more negative than the Slovaks).³⁸ Thus, the data were revealing that although the gaps

³³ Which included the following groups: church or religious organizations (later excluded by Dowley and Silver as yielding to Putnam's label of such organization as 'hierarchical,') sport or recreation organisations, art, music or educational organizations, trade unions, political parties, environmental organizations, professional associations, charitable and other voluntary organizations. *Ibid.*, p. 508.

³⁴ "The E.U.: Love It or Leave It," *Time Atlantic*, October 21, 2002, Issue 17, p. 30, <http://web11.epnet.com/>, March 27, 2003, p. 2.

³⁵ Dowley and Silver, *op cit*, p. 509.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁷ While the Czechs might not exemplify ethnic pluralism, the Roma population is a significant ingredient within the country.

³⁸ Dowley and Silver, *op cit*.

between majority and minority groups were statistically significant, the data need to be interpreted. Dowley and Silver found, for example, that the Russian *majority* in **Russia** was the least supportive of democratic principles, the least satisfied with their current government, and among the least confident in new governing institutions of the majority populations of the sample.³⁹ While the Czechs and Slovaks in the early 1990s were “far more interested in politics than the rest of the ethnic groups in the region... This high level of interest did not signal interest in the polity, but instead polarization and subsequent dissolution of the state” (separating Czechoslovakia into the Czech and Slovak Republics).⁴⁰

4.5.4. Dowley and Silver then turned toward a multivariate analysis of social capital, ethnicity and support for democracy. Again, “...*high levels of explicitly political interest among ethnic minorities do not represent social capital in the making, but perhaps political mobilization against democratic development.*”⁴¹ The data did show that majority or titular ethnic groups with involvement in voluntary organizations is associated with higher levels of confidence in new institutions, and higher levels of support for the current regime...⁴² As a result of this analysis, the authors could state that “...The impact of social capital differs according to whether the individuals belong to a titular or a minority ethnic group in a state in transition...(further) Being a member of a voluntary organization is not correlated with support for democratic principles. In fact, among minority populations voluntary group membership is more often associated with lower support for democratic institutions and principles.”⁴³

4.5.5. Thus, the Dowley and Silver data suggest two rather non-intuitive conclusions (from Putnam’s standpoint): (a) a *weak* relationship exists between social capital and democratization in post-communist regimes; (b) in examining the relationship between political interest and membership in voluntary associations, “...for members of the titular majority, greater political involvement and social engagement were associated with greater support for democracy, the government and regime institutions. Among ethnic minorities they found that the more mobilized member of those groups were *less* supportive of democracy than the more passive members.”⁴⁴ The authors observed, “...Social capital theory cannot be easily transported from the established democracies to ethnically plural societies in transition. In the post-communist countries the transition unleashed the potential not only for a

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 518.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 518. This statement is speculative, however, since there was no referendum. The split was brought about by the respective prime ministers: Klaus (CZ) and Meciar (SK). The data may simply have shown a *fait accompli*.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 519.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 520.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 522.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 524.

liberation of minorities but also for their suppression, not only for minority groups...but also for majority groups to want to deny or limit those claims and aspirations in the interest of reserving the physical boundaries of the state or their newly won dominant position in the system.⁴⁵

4.5.6. Thus, we conclude, in this paper, that the data for the Czechs, based upon surveys conducted while the Czechs were part of Czechoslovakia, still manage to display the profile of a country that centers upon the means of the 20 countries surveyed (with the exception of interest in politics). There are virtually no data to suggest that the Czechs surpass the mean in joining voluntary organizations nor that they are associated with high levels of regime disappointment (though Rose shows the Czechs with low trust levels). Consequently, the Czech profile seems to indicate a certain malaise toward politics, joining voluntary organizations and, in Putnam's term, "cooperating to overcome social problems." With the exception of those instances reported herein in which the Czechs have demonstrated against Temelin or registered mild disfavor with EU accession, neither issue has mobilized the Czech public into support OR hostility with the possible exception of the split into the Czech and Slovak Republics.⁴⁶

4.5.8. Analysis suggests two elements: timing and substance by various actors. The substance will show, particularly in conjunction with timing, that the subject has been punctuated by disparate reactions from NGOs and scattered responses from Austria and Germany. This, in itself, when coupled with EU accession, constitutes an **exogenous** factor that reflects globalization and cross-border activity. Cross-border activity may well increase as policy stimuli occur in regions located in more than one state.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 524-25.

⁴⁶ While the Russian case may not be identical to the Czech case, there is a plaintive tune that resonates with the Czech *reluctance* (emphasis added) to actively involve itself in public issues. Kesselman opines, "It is obvious that Russian society has become passive...the average Russian today is estranged from the problems of others, and this estrangement is the result of a boomerang effect after the illusions and hopes that the country's population stood up for in the early 1990s proved to be unjustified." Leonid Kesselman is a political analyst at the Sociology Department, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg. Boris Pustyntsev, Head of the Citizen's Watch Human Rights organization added, "...In general, Russians have changed their attitudes toward mass public actions...Russians take the position that 'nothing depends on me' because their expectations that their standard of living would improve with freedom turned out to be an illusion." Says Kesselman, "...Active anti-war protests in the West are **symptomatic of states with the 'presence of a civil society,' where people believe that their opinion is important and can influence something,**" (emphasis added). Kesselman and Pustyntsev's comments are from *Johnson's Russia List* # 7121, March 28, 2003, pp. 13-14, www.cdi.org. Nevertheless, a Russian court case signals an interesting development: "A recent court ruling in Karelia might establish a legal precedent that would allow thousands of residents to receive financial compensation for damage to their health caused by the Nadvoitskii Aluminum Factory...A local court awarded 50,000 rubles (\$1,600) to a plaintiff...who alleged that his health has suffered from factory pollution in the surrounding environment." "Environmentalists Win Legal Victory in Far North," *RFE/RL Newsline*, April 2, 2003, www.rferl.org/newsline/2003/04/1-RUS/rus-020403.asp. Will Czech lawyers show interest in such local cases?

The Czech Republic borders on Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine and Poland. The aforementioned area of Silesia is an example. The unemployment rate in the Czech Republic in southern Silesia may well be 40% (assumedly the same in Polish Silesia). The flooding of the Vltava River had impact upon the Elbe in Germany. Certainly the Danube flooding affected Austria, Slovakia and Hungary. Thus, *ex ante*, one can argue that prior references to globalistic and cross border influences (the citizens of Belarus do not need to be convinced of northwesterly winds from Ukraine's Chernobyl disaster) that were treated somewhat casually (wind and water being more than occasionally troublesome) can now be considered as a legitimate domestic policy influence resulting from an **international "externality."**

- 4.5.9. The cross-border activity resumed in January-February, 2003, as Austrian activists commenced a series of hunger strikes that they promised would continue to Easter.⁴⁷ Interestingly, the Czech anti-nuclear organizations did not participate in the hunger strike, commenting, that in the Czech Republic, **hunger strikes are not seen as a "form of protest that could address politicians and the public efficiently** (emphasis added).⁴⁸ The Austrian protest terminated after four hours.⁴⁹ The NGO pattern may derive relevance from observations in Hungary which placed causation on a vacuum created by prior Communist regimes.⁵⁰ Further, Vass concludes in his chapter on organized economic interests in Hungary that (in Hungary) "...During the first four years of the multiparty system the overpoliticized character of the public and (to some extent) private spheres hindered the development of civil organizations...The activists and leaders of civil groups became involved in party politics...Such 'overlapping' of personnel **contributed more to party influence on civil society than to influence on macropolitics by civil organizations**" (emphasis added).⁵¹

5.0 Conclusion

⁴⁷ "Austrian Activists Protest Outside Temelin Nuclear Power Plant, *Ceske Noviny*, 2-20-03, www.ceskenoviny.cz.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Mathilde Halla, from the Upper Austrian Platform against Nuclear Danger, commented, "We request that the company CEZ (Czech power company) make public the additional steps related to addressing the security defects in Temelin. As the operator of the plant, CEZ should, in the interests of the Czech and the Austrian publics, remove all security defects listed in the 'black book.'" This was in reference to an Austrian expert report about the safety of the South Bohemian nuclear power plant.

⁵⁰ Observing a "...peculiar trait of postcommunist societies, that since civil society was destroyed by the communist regime, there are only a few weak civil associations, unions, interest organizations and autonomous communities..." Rudolf Tokes, cited in Jolan Roka, Terry Cox and Laszlo Vass, *Communication and Consultation in Public Space*, Budapest: Szazadveg Kiado, 2002, p.116.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* p.128.

The paper has identified two outcomes in the Czech Republic that may have further relevance for other postcommunist countries. First, at the present moment, the Czech government itself is a major interest group. Secondly, the government is in a position to exercise its power in favor of public policy decisions that it supports. Competing interest groups such as environmental groups, trans-border interest groups including trans-border governments, in this case, Austria and Germany, have been unable to counter Czech government interests with public pronouncements and demonstrations. Labor unions have been relatively tranquil, however, the passing of time may separate them from a tripartite arrangement: the confines of this development seem similar to transnational union activity in the Visegrad Four. Despite the active intragovernmental political activity expended upon intracoalition arguments and elections, the government seems to have preferred a 'wait and see' policy regarding the Temelin nuclear reactor plant and EU accession. Capitalizing on a somewhat apathetic public, the government seems able to apply enough pressure in favor of its policy preferences when needed. In this respect, it has probably correctly understood the public's preferences regarding the two policy questions raised. Neither environmental groups (Temelin) nor farmers (EU) possessed sufficient political strength to mount a serious challenge against the government's wishes. While it is clear that the government prefers to join the EU, its policy regarding Temelin seems to be to postpone closing of the power station. The EU is now emerging as an important 'interest group' that may easily transcend the efforts of Austria and Germany to object to Czech nuclear power policy. As the EU begins to unfold its new 'constitution' and the reach of its economic, political and social standards, the Czechs will, like the other EU members have an opportunity to fashion the future governing of Europe, in general, and Central Europe, in particular.

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POSTSCRIPT:

It was agreed in Bucharest, April, 2003, to include the following items for research review: findings, theoretical insights, what should be pursued?

Findings:

- (1) The Czech government is the primary interest group; and,
- (2) On the basis of two policy issues, Temelin nuclear reactor, and EU accession, the government was able to lessen civic opposition by resorting to political agreement with an adjoining country (Austria) (intergovernmental); and by conforming to EU standards, (supranational). On the basis of these two policy issues, civic engagement was not effective in diverting the government from its chosen policy preference.

Theoretical Insights:

- (1) Putnam's assumptions regarding civic engagement⁵² may have to be passed through a postcommunist prism: (a) active civic engagement may or may not energize democratic development; in the case of majority publics it seems to indicate frustration with formal government; in the case of minority populations, it may signal hostility to formal government. While initially this may postulate an *inverse* relationship to democracy, it needs to be followed in the long run; civic engagement may *eventually* bring about additions to democracy despite its initial susceptibility toward political ennui.
- (2) Postcommunist countries with cross-border activity may need to consider anti-systemic activity from civic and governmental groups (for example, in health and economic issues) in the future. Thus, interest groups may have regional (exogenous) influence.
- (3) The EU, WTO and other supranational organizations may have significant (exogenous) impact upon postcommunist countries as the latter pursue membership and adopt constitutional, legal and economic change required for membership.

What Should Be Pursued?

- (1) It may be helpful to pursue the cross-border activity of neighboring countries particularly involving externalities caused by polluting elements such as air (Chernobyl), water (flooding) and other phenomena such as chemical spills or toxic waste which have common pool or public good dynamics.
- (2) It would be desirable to trace the impact of intergovernmental and supranational influences on domestic change which is likely to affect a wide range of domestic public policy questions.

⁵² Putnam, *op cit.*