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C.D.W. Thornton, Chief, Office of Operations
Analysis (THRU) E.J. Bloch, Director,
Division of Production, Washington D. C.
J. E. Travis, Manager,
Hanford Operations Office, Richland, Washington
ECONOMIC INFORMATION FOR HANFORD PROCESS PLANNING

SYMBOL: 01:RLP

HAN-61085

We have in the past felt the need of better information on the costs associated with the production of slugs for Hanford irradiation and the value of our products. Attempts to realistically determine the economic optimum mode of operating the Hanford plants have been handicapped by the absence of this information. One such attempt is reported in the attachment, and another in HW-36128, "Hanford Irradiation Goal Exposures," a copy of which is in the Production Division files. Other work in which off-site cost figures are needed is the determination of the economic optimum type of fringe enrichment for Hanford reactors. Another example is the evaluating of certain schemes involving the isotopic degradation of uranium, such as mixing irradiated E slugs with irradiated natural uranium slugs in the dissolver vessels of the separation plants in such proportions as to produce uranium of natural isotopic composition, thus avoiding the necessity of two fluorination steps and gaseous diffusion processing, as well as saving on transportation costs.

In all these studies, what is needed is a knowledge of the cost of incremental production at Oak Ridge and Fernald - that is, the cost of small additions to normal production or the savings of small reductions. This in general is quite different from average unit production costs. In addition, it would be desirable to know the worth of Hanford products - uranium and plutonium - that is, the amount per unit the A.E.C. is willing to pay for increases in output rates. Some of the information probably will have to be arbitrary and all of it will be valid for a limited time span. Nevertheless, it would be of considerable value here in evaluating possible process changes and in making proper day-to-day decisions on metal discharges, such as premature discharge of certain lots of rupture-prone slugs.

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C.D.W. Thornton

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We propose to send two or three Hanford employees to Washington, D. C. to work out with your group the types of information needed, to determine how well the information now at your disposal meets the needs, and to discuss the means of routinely obtaining the information not now available routinely. We hope to arrange the visit for mid January, if this is convenient for you. Your comments would be appreciated.

Enclosure:

HW-40151 (HAN-60927) 1-3A

cc: E.J. Bloch

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1st REVIEW-DATE: 7-7-98
AUTHORITY AOC ADC ADD
NAME: R.M. IVEY
ORG: PNM
2nd REVIEW-DATE: 7/7/98
NAME: J. Watrous
ORG: PNM/ECV

PM Oct 11-13-98
10-19-98
C.D. Gandy

CG-NMP-1, Rev 1, (EO Update)

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