

MONSANTO CHEMICAL COMPANY

CLINTON LABORATORIES

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August 5, 1946

District Engineer
Manhattan District
Corps of Engineers
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Attention: Mr. A. V. Peterson

Dear Sir:

MANHATTAN DISTRICT
File No. 600.1 (7)
REPOSITORY Texas A. M. Archives & Special Collections
COLLECTION Paul Aebersold Papers
BOX No. 1
FOLDER General Correspondence - July - Dec. 1946

I am writing you to review some of the things which were brought out in our conference with you and Drs. McDaniels and Aebersold on Wednesday, July 31. In our opinion the work now being done by the Process Improvement Division of the Tennessee Eastman Corporation at the Y-12 plant is and promises to continue to be scientifically one of the most important projects now under way in this country. There are innumerable very important nuclear and chemical problems which can be solved only by having available the naturally occurring elements with their isotopic abundance appreciably altered. There are many other problems which can be solved only when the various stable isotopes of the naturally occurring elements are available in substantially pure form.

We should have as the very basis of our future work in nuclear physics and chemistry knowledge of the various cross sections of the pure stable isotopes. The importance of this information, not only in determining and predicting pile operation, but in the choice of materials for pile construction, is evident.

Furthermore, experiments by which we can increase our knowledge of the nature of the atomic nucleus will be greatly facilitated by the availability of pure stable isotopes. There are many problems in radiochemistry which can only be solved by the availability of stable elements with altered abundance of the natural isotopes. Eventually separated isotopes of the elements may provide invaluable raw material for the production by pile or other irradiation of radioisotopes of value in science, medicine, and industry.

It is appreciated that you are aware of the importance of these separated stable isotopes, and we are very grateful to you and to your associates in the Manhattan District for the encouragement which you have given the Tennessee Eastman Corporation in initiating and continuing this program. We would like to say, however, that, since we believe that the stable isotone program at Y-12 is today scientifically more important and soon will be more important on every count than the uranium isotope separation, we wish that greater emphasis could be placed upon it. It is appreciated that this is difficult where one company is responsible for both programs with its major responsibility the efficient conduct of the uranium separation.

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District Engineer
Att: Mr. A. V. Peterson

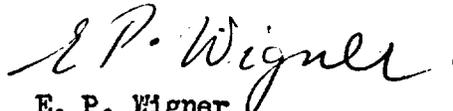
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The majority of the scientific and technical personnel responsible for this work at Y-12 feel as we do about the relative importance of the two separation programs. They are, however, sometimes under the impression that the importance of their stable isotope work is not fully appreciated and that the security regulations dictated by the uranium separation program tend to isolate them from their fellow scientists and scientific work in general. We have heard reports that they are leaving the project at an alarming rate.

We hope, therefore, that you will continue to show your beneficent interest in this program by doing everything possible, first to assure that the XRX equipment remains in production of stable isotopes on an arrangement that will be unaffected by any changes that may take place in the uranium separation program, and secondly to maintain and increase the feeling of the technical personnel that they are indeed contributing greatly to scientific work of the highest importance.

Yours very sincerely,



E. P. Wigner
Director of Research

EPW:t

cc: District Engineer (2)
J. H. Lum
W. P. Leber
Central File
Reading File

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