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49-5. Date: May 1, 1949

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TECHNICAL DIVISION - CHEMICAL DEVELOPMENT

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Laboratory and simi-works - section I

REPORT FOR MONTH ENDING APRIL 20, 1949

This report is prepared solely for use in the Technical Division.

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			Page Number
1.0	Introduction	Street server to Entertal Comments.	3
2.0	Summary	•	5
3.0	Redox	my gir t without the trighting in them the constant	6
	3.1 Plutonium Oxi	dation - Reduction Studies in Acid Deficient	
		ate Solutions - Inboratory	. 6
	3.2 Effect of Oxi	dation Temperature on ORAL #1 Decontamination	-
	* a h aana A aana	Control of the transfer of the	13
	3.3 Ruthenium Stu	dy - Effect of Acid Concentration, Sodium	
		exone Treatment - Laboratory	13
	3.4 Development o	f Acetone Food Treatment Procedure - Semi-Wor	ks 18
4.0	Metal Recovery	स्त्र का त्रा के देशक प्रस्तुक स्त्रुपति स्त्रुपति होते हैं। यह स्त्रुपति के स्त्रुपति स्त्रिपति स्त्रिपत	55
	4.1 Uranyl Ammoni	um Phosphate Precipitation Process Developmen	t -
	Laboratory	sharing (prinapperday) garantipe in.	22
	4.2 Solvent Extre	otion Process Development - Laboratory	24
5.0	Waste Disposal	are a charact puntition mile in	25
	5.1 Decontaminati	on of Sodium Hitrate - Semi-Works	25
	5.2 Condensate De	contamination by Ion Exchange - Semi-Works	26
6.0	Barium 140 Separati	on Development - Ion Exchange Study - Laborat	ory 27
7.0	"25" Development	- Metal Solution Crud Removal - Semi-Works	28
8.0	Dry Fluoride Devel	opment - Laboratory	29 ["]
9.0	Protective Coating	s for Concrete Surfaces - Semi-Works	30

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1.0 Introduction

The Redox development program on the first cycle and second uranium cycle for the recovery and decontamination of uranium and plutonium has been completed in the Semi-Works. The Laboratory is continuing work on the plutonium, ruthenium, and the solvent treatment phases of the process.

The first cold run in the CERL Semi-Works is underway for the development of the uranyl assembles phosphate process for the recovery of the uranium from the Hanford metal waste tanks. The laboratory development of an alternate presignation procedure for the supermatant and total waste was completed, and no further work is planned other than necessary assistance to the semi-works operation.

The development of an alternate solvent extraction process for the recovery of uranium from the metal waste tainlis at Banford and CRRL has continued in the laboratory. Data were obtained on the effect of varying the solvent composition and the acidity, and a preliminary flowsheet run was made in batch counter-current equipment.

Two ion exchange processes have been developed by the laboratory. The first process replaces the final precipitation step and the second replaces both electrolysis and final precipitation in the Rala process. Plans are being made to study the extraction and metathesis steps in the Semi-Works.



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A filtration study is continuing on the problem of crud removal from the solution of the fuel assemblies from the Buclear Reactor Development Reactor. Data on filtration rates and uranium hold up were obtained.

In connection with the development of chemical processes for reducing the volume of the radioactive waste, two studies are in progress. The sodium nitrate crystallization process for separating this inactive salt from the bulk of the activity was investigated on a laboratory scale and plans were made for semi-works scale operation. The study of ion exchange for the reduction of activity from dilute solutions such as the condensate from the proposed radiochemical waste evaporator was continued to determine the capacity of the ion exchange bed.

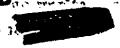
The study of the chemical stability of commercially available paints was completed. Abrasica tests are to be made and the total results will be coordinated with decontamination tests underway in the Biology Division.





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2.0 Summary

Redox

- 1. Pretreatment of the metal solution with acetone and sodium mitrite improved the ruthenium decontamination by a factor of two to four in semi-works tests.
- 2. The oxidation of plutonium from IV to VI proceeded at a satisfactory rate in either acid or basic metal solutions.

Hanford Metal Recovery - UAP Process

The diamentum phosphate procedure for uranyl ammonium phosphate precipitation was demonstrated on a 500 milliliter scale with simulated Banford total metal waste and gave results comparable to the Hanford supernatent runs; nearly 1% uranium loss and gross fission product decontamination of 10³.

ORMI. Metal Recovery - Solvent Extraction Process

A counter-current batch solvent extraction using 40% tributyl phosphate - 60% hexane as the solvent gave a uranium loss of 0.07% and a gross beta decontamination factor of 5000.

6

3.0 Redox

3.1 Plutonium Oxidation - Reduction Studies in Acid Deficient Aluminum

Mitrate Solutions

The work of the past month has been devoted to investigation of feed solutions used in the CEML Redox process for the recovery of plutonium. This work was carried out using a Beckman spectrophotometer which permitted the study of the various plutonium valence states without modifying the solution chemically. One purpose of this work was to obtain some information which would be relevant in explaining some discrepancies in the pilot plant plutonium recovery data.

In carrying out the slug dissolving step, it is possible to attain a range of free MMO₃ concentrations from excess free acid to a deficiency of free acid depending upon the amount of manium metal dissolved.

Therefore, this investigation will be divided into two parts, one dealing with solutions that contain free acid and the other with solutions that are either neutral or soid deficient.

The Preparation of Synthetic Dissolver Solutions

Aluminum nitrate was used in place of uranyl nitrate. This was desirable because Al(NO₃)₃ solutions do not absorb light appreciably in the range 400-1000 millimierous whereas uranyl nitrate is strongly colored. This substitution permitted full use of the spectral range of interest. Moreover, when the nitrate ion concentration is the same, it is felt that substitution of aluminum for uranyl ion has no effect.

Plutonium was added to the solution as wither Plutonium IV or a mixture of Plutonium IV and Plutonium VI, which was spectrophotometrically free



7

of any polymer and contained only traces of calcium and magnesium.

The Behavior of Plutonium in Synthetic Feed Solutions Containing Free Acid

Depending on conditions prevailing in the feed solutions during the slug dissolving step, there are three possible conditions for the plutonium:

mild or willly the germania be-

- 1. If oxidizing conditions prevail during the dissolving, all the plutonium may be converted to Plutonium VI. In this case, when the free soid is reduced to CRUL Redox specifications, 0.2 normal soid deficient, it has been shown that the Plutonium VI is stable.
- 2. If reducing conditions prevail during the dissolving, all the plutonium may be present as Plutonium IV.
- 3. However, the plutonium will probably be distributed in all valence states depending upon the acidity and temperature of the feed. The equilibrium prevailing will, in general, be governed by the following equations:

$$3 \text{ Pu}^{+\frac{1}{4}} + 2 \text{ H}_{0} = 2 \text{ Pu}^{+3} + \text{Pu}^{0}_{2}^{++} + \text{ H}^{+}$$

$$\text{Pu}^{+\frac{1}{4}} + \text{Pu}^{0}_{2}^{+} = \text{Pu}^{0}_{2}^{++} + \text{Pu}^{+3}$$

The problem in cases 2 and 3 becomes the study of the behavior of Plutonium IV under conditions simulating the manipulations necessary to produce a satisfactory ORGL Redox feed.

The problem was investigated in a free acid concentration of 0.2 H EMO3.

In general the procedure was to carry out all steps such as oxidation or preparation of "equilibrium mixtures" at 0.2 H free EMO3 and them adjust to 0.2 normal basic and attempt to account for all the plutonium as Plutonium VI.

The first series of experiments were carried out in the following

manner:

in m " U) frame.

Al(mo₃)₃ - 1.3 m

EMO2 - 0.2 M

Pu (total) - 0.000625 M

II

 $A1(10_{3})_{3} - 1.3 M$

ENO2 - 0.2 M

Pu (total) - 0.000625 M

MagCr207 - 0.1 M

A. After standing 24 hours at 25°C, II in the A. After standing 24 hours the plutonium was found to be: " "thousand here at room temperature the Pu IV - 64.5% Par throng to the thrib grade plutoning was found to be:

- It is a Probable VI. Come - A

Pu VI - 28.25 " " " Att: " bud han " " Pu VI - 92.35

B. The solution was made 0.1 M in MagCro0, and heated for 6 hours at 85°C then allowed to cool 18 hrs. Analysis indicated that the plutonium was 97% Plutonium VI.

B. The solution was adjusted to pH 1.6 and heated at 85°C for 6 hours and allowed to : cool 18 hours. Analysis in dicated that plutonium was 90% Plutonium VI.

The good agreement between I and II in the amounts of Plutonium VI present indicates that substantially all the plutonium had been oxidized.

When this experiment was begun it was not anticipated that the exidation in II would proceed as far as it did. It had been hoped to prepare a more equal mixture of Plutonium IV and Plutonium VI, then adjust to an acid deficient

condition and attempt to secure 100% oriention under the condition described. However, in the case of II the low Plutonium IV concentration decreases the possibility of polymerising Plutonium IV.

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Another difficulty is created by the addition of Ma₂Cr₂O₇ to these solutions because Ma₂Cr₂O₇ makes it impossible to analyse for Plutonium IV or plutonium polymer since it absorbs light so strongly in the region below 600 millimicrons.

In general, plutonium material balances obtained spectrophotometrically agree within 2-3% with analysis by counting.

Another series of experiments were carried out with the "equilibrium mixtures" of Plutonium IV and Plutonium VI. A solution of the composition

, A1(10)3 - 1.3 M

EMO3 - 0.2 M

Pu (total) - 0.000734 M

was heated at 85°C for 6 hours and allowed to stand at room temperature for 44 hours. The total plutonium analyzed

Pu VI - 89.6% ...

Pu IV - 10.44

It was spectrophotometrically free of polymer.

Another solution of similar composition was heated at 85°C for 2 hours and allowed to stand for 43 hours. Analysis for plutonium indicated:

Pu VI - 65.24

Pu IV - 44.6%

It is interesting to note that the same quilibrium concentrations of Plutonium IV and Plutonium VI were not attained in the two cases but varied

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with the length of heating. Other studies on the equilibrium between Plutonium IV and Plutonium VI, which were carried out in perchlorate or lower nitrate ion concentration systems, indicated that the equilibrium was dependent mainly upon the acidity.

Results that were obtained in these experiments may be explained by attributing the increased exidation to the nitrate ion or the fact that solutions did not stand long enough to attain true equilibrium. However, it may be pointed out that the presence of high nitrate ion concentration appears to increase the amount of Flutonium VI produced.

Two experiments were carried out on the "equilibrium mixture" of Plutonium IV and Plutonium VI. The equilibrium mixtures were prepared by heating at 85°C for eight hours and allowing the solution to stand several days before using. Unfortunately they were not analysed before the experiment.

III

A1(103)3 - 1.3 M

2003 - 0.2 M

Pu (total) - 0.000614 M

IV

DA1(NO₃)₃ - 1.3 M

HMO2 - 0.2 M

Pu (total) - 0.000638 M

Adjust to pH 1-8 and add:

Ma_Cr_O, to 0.1 M conc-heat-for six hours at 05°C and let

stand at room temperature for

18 hours.

Adds

Analysis for plutonium;

Pu VI - 93.4%

for six hours at 85°C and let stand at room temperature for 18 hours.

Analysis for plutonium:

Pu VI - 90.5%



In the experiments described in this section, it has been pointed out that the presence of Ma_Cr_O_ interferred with determination of the other plutonium valence species. In order to overcome this deficiency it would be necessary to choose another oxidizing agent of equal oxidizing power which was colorless. These experiments will probably be repeated and extended by using either sodium or potassium bromate as the oxident since the oxidizing strength of these reagents are almost equivalent to dichromate and they themselves as well as their products of reaction are colorless.

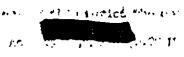
The Behavior of Flutonium in Synthetic Feed Solutions which are Basic or Meutral

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Because of the polymerization and disproportionation that Plutonium IV undergoes when it is in solutions of low free acid concentration, it is not advisable to attempt the preparation of such solutions. Moreover, in attempting to approximate the neutral or basic feed solutions which are prepared by dissolving sufficient metal to lower the acidity, the acidity changes at a more uniform rate as more metal goes in the solution. Thus, if we assume that the plutonium goes into solution as Plutonium IV, we may expect that as the acidity is decreased the Plutonium IV will disproportionate and that the equilibrium between the valence states will adjust itself as the free acidity and temperature of the feed changes.

One way to approximate this condition in the laboratory is to start with a solution of Plutonium IV in MHO₃ containing urea. When a solution of this composition is heated at reflux, the urea is hydrolyzed to MH₃ and CO₂ at a convenient rate so that it is possible to reduce the acidity slowly.





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17 7 - 100%

A synthetic feed of the following composition was prepared:

11103 - 2.0 M

Pu (total) - 0.000682 M

Urea - 5.2 grs

After 27 hours reflux the solution analyzed:

Acidity - pH 0.21 (0.11 M)

Pu V - 6.0%

Pu VI - 96.4%

More were was added to this solution and the reflux was extended for another 24 hours. At the end of this period the analysis was

Acidity - pH 1.6 (0.02 M basic)

Pu VI - 100%

In both analyses spectrophotometric examination failed to indicate the presence of any other valence species or plutonium polymor.

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3.2 Effect Oxidation Temperature on ORBL #1 Decontamination

Table 3.2-1

The Effect on Decontamination of Heating Metal Feed Solutions

CRML #1 flowsheet conditions used in all runs. Runs made in laboratory counter-current batch extraction consisting of 6 extraction and & scrub stages

	()	lation	Extraction D. F.			· Overall D. F.		
Run 10.	Time Hrs.	Тевр. °С	Bar	-13" Tight	Ru	:ω ⁵) / β	· 7	Ru
c-72	24	25	1.7×10 ²	² ′′8ŏ	32	3.62103	4.5 z1 03	3.1x10 ²
c-73	6	85-90	1.45x10 ²	1 FB0	^ባ ້36 "	3.14±10 ³	4.52103	2.255x10 ²
C-74	24	85-90	1.6±10 ² "	~~~ ~	" 35 "	4.13 x 10 ³	4.52203	2.6x10 ²

* It was not possible to calculate an accurate overall 7 D.T. because of low activity level.

No effect was noted on the solvent extraction describes institute the oxidation digestion temperature and time for the ORIL #1 flowsheet was varied from 24 hours at room temperature to 24 hours at 85-90°C (see Table 3.2-1).

3.3 Ruthenium Study.

A pretreatment of Redox feeds utilizing acetome reduction of ruthenium compounds, to increase decontamination especially in acid systems was described in a preliminary report last month. Ruthenium D.F.'s of 2x10² and overall D.F.'s as high as 1.3x10³ have been demonstrated in laboratory counter-current runs, under ARL first cycle conditions. Further studies have been made to determine the effect on ruthenium decontamination of (a) the nitric acid concentration during the pretreatment (b) the inclusion of manon,



14

(c) the method of slug dissolution and (d) the apparent qualities of hexone.

Optimum conditions for the nitrite-acctons treatment in AHL first cycle feed appear to be the following: prior to addition of the sodium dichromate, i.e. At 2 M UNH, 0.3 M HMO3, add 0.025 M HMO2 and 0.5%/volume acctons (0.07 M); heat to 90-100°C for about four hours them adjust conditions to 2.0 M UNH, 0.3 HMO3, and 0.1 Ma_Cr_07. Specifications for nitric acid concentration during the treatment have been set at 0.35 ± 0.05 M HMO3.

Effect of ENO, Concentration During Feed Pretreatment Using Acetone

To feeds containing 2 M UNH at varying nitric acid concentrations, 1.0% acctome/volume was added and heated at 100°C for two hours. The solutions were adjusted to 0.3 M HNO3 and made 0.1 M Ma_Cr_2O_7. The feeds were them mixed with equal volumes of scrub, 1.3 M Al(NO3)3 0.3 N HNO3 and 0.1 M Ha_Cr_2O_7, and extracted with two volumes of hexome containing 0.3 M HNO3. This extract was scrubbed with four successive equal volume passes of the above scrub solution. The data obtained gave information concerning distribution coefficients on batch extraction and scrubbing. Overall D.F.'s were calculated by specific activity measurement of the feed and the final scrub. Although this data cannot be directly correlated with column conditions, it allows comparison of treated and untreated feeds.

The information obtained indicated that the optimum EEO_3 concentration for the acctome treatment is in the range of 0.3 to 0.4 M (see Table 3.3-1).



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Effect of HTO, on the Acetone Pretrestment of ARL First

Cycle Feeds Containing S.W. Dissolver Solutions

Berub: 1.3 M Al(NO₃)₃ 0.3 M HNO₃ 0.1 M Ba₂Cr₂O₇ Ext.Ratio: 7/S/O-1/1/2

Organic: Bazone (SD) 0.3 N ENO3

15

Scrub Ratio: 8/0-1/1

All feeds were treated with 1% acetone

N. HNO, during Acet. Treatment	c/m/ml Final Scrub	D.F.
Control-No Acetone	26,000	55
-0.45 H	17,000	97
-0.25 Ti	15,000	105
0.00 H	12,500	128
+0.10 H	6.00	247
+0.20 H	1.000	1560
+0.25 N	600	3800
+0.30 N	170	9,000
+0.40 H	280	6,000
+0.50 ¥	456	3500
+1.00 ¥	570	2700
+2.00 H	8630	200

May 4, 1949

The Mitrite-Acetone Pretreatment

It was indicated previously that the inclusion of 0.025-0.05 H BaNO₂ in the pretreatment of feed solutions was essentially unimportant in the effectiveness of the acetone effect on ruthenium distribution. At that time only two different samples of semi-works dissolver solution has been investigated. Tests unde since with pilot plant dissolver solutions (which were unde with excess metal) indicate that NaNO₂ may be necessary. Although no explanation of this behavior is possible at this time, it appears the acetone treatment will be more generally effective if the ruthenium in the feed is first converted to the nitrite, insuring perhaps a more quantitative form of the element.

The optimum nitric acid concentration during pretreatment utilizing nitrite-acetone is essentially similar to that using acetone alone.

Using dissolver solution from Rum 42-R pilot plant rum, D.F.'s calculated after four batch scrubs were 350 for control, 450 for the acetome treatment, and 1000 for the nitrite-acetome treatment, indicating in general that results are much lower than those obtained with semi-works dissolver solution. The increased D.F. found with use of NaNO₂ appears to be significant, however. Similar results were obtained with rum 46-R solution.

It appears that the effect of excess metal or the consequent conditions of low nitric acid concentration toward completion of dissolving affects the chemical forms of the ruthenium present in the F.P. solution. Further studies will be made to determine if BaNO₂ addition to the pilot plant unterial will suffice to produce added ruthenium decontamination.



17

The Effect of Hoxone Treatment

When work was first begun on the acetoms pretreatment of feeds, it seemed apparent that the hazone used was of especially good quality, since on obtaining a new supply from semi-works storage, D.F.'s obtained from identical feeds were observed to have decreased significantly, i.e., from 9x10³ to 1.5x10³. Analysis of the two different hexones revealed that each had a reducing normality of 0.002. Scouting experiments were then begun to ascertain if these differences were real.

A sample of pilot plant hexone was observed to give decontamination factors of only 4.5x102. After steem distillation, this decontemination factor was increased to 1.3x103. This latter material, previously contacted with macro amounts of Ru(HO2); at 0.3 H HHO2 and after thorough water washing, gave a decontamination factor of 2.4x103. Similar treatment with macro amounts of columbium gave a decontamination factor of 2.6x103, and with zirconium a decontamination factor of 5.3x103. It was found that if the harme were contacted with 0.1 M Ma_Cr_0, 0.6 M HNO3 washed with 0.3 M MaOH, and then thoroughly H₂O washed, the decontamination factor after sircomium treatment was increased to 1.8x10. A counter-current run was made using AML first evels conditions and utilizing sirconium treated hamms. With eight scrub stages, the following regults were obtained: for ruthenium, decontemination factor on extraction was 86 and overall was 156; for total 8, decontamination factor on extraction was 6.52x102 and overall was 1.3x107; no γ was detectable in the final product solution. A previous rum utilizing untreated hexpus gave an overall \$ decontamination factor of 670 by comparison.



These results, though incomclusive, indicate that hexome quality can be improved. Work will be continued to ascertain, if possible, the effect of the various impurities or decomposition products of hexons on specific fission product decontemination.

3.4 Development of Acetone Feed Treatment Procedure - Semi-Works

The acetome metal feed digestion procedure, in semi-works runs, improved the gross beta decontamination factor of the AML Redox first cycle process by a factor of four, from 120 to 470, and of the ORML #1 process by a factor of two to three, from 2000 to 4000. While the acetome treatment significantly improved the acid AML Redox process, it was yet a factor of five lower in decontamination than the acid deficient ORML process (see Table 3.4-1).

Comparing the results of using the acctone treatment in both flowsheets, it may be observed that the CRML #1 flowsheet will yield:

- (a) gross decontemination factors which are 10 times higher,
- (b) ruthenium decontamination factors which appear to be about four times higher, and
- (c) columbium and mirconium decontamination factors which appear to
 be 60 to 100 times higher than values obtained from the acid flow-

The decontemination enhancement from incorporating the acetone pretreatment was not as pronounced in the semi-works runs as indicated in laboratory scale runs. However, the scrub section on the semi-works columns is only & feet high, and it may be that with additional scrub length a more pronounced



advantage would be demonstrated.

It appears from the four runs that the acetone treatment without sodium nitrite may be best. In any case, no operational difficulties were encountered in semi-works runs by incorporating the acetone pretreatment in the run procedure. Plutonium and uranium losses were unaffected by use of the acetone pretreatment.

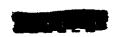
With the completion of these runs the semi-works Redox program was term-

Procedure for Acetone Pretreatment of the Metal Feed

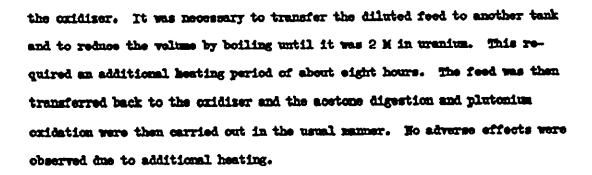
The cold UNE solution was transferred to the oridizer tank in Cell #2 and spiked with the solution from the dissolution of two X slugs. The acidity was adjusted to 0.3 M H with ENO3. One percent by volume of according nitrite was also added to the feed. The mixture was heated to 92°C by a steam jacket on oridizer and held there for two hours. The heat was turned off and sufficient sodium dichromate was added to the feed to make it 0.05 M En_Cr_2O_7 and the temperature of the solution was maintained at 85°C for six hours to complete the oridation of plutonium to the VI state. After the oridation, the feed was adjusted to 0.3 M H for the acid flowsheet runs and to 0.2 M acid deficient for the CRML #1 flowsheet runs. Sedium hydroxide was used to adjust the solution to the acid deficient state.

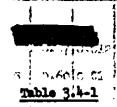
The runs were then made in the usual nammer with samples of the efficient streams taken every four hours as in previous runs.

The feed preparation for R-36, an CRML flowsheet run, was somewhat unorthodox in that the feed was inadvertently diluted on being transferred to



May 4, 1949





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Semi-Works First Cycle Redox Development Runs

Conditions common to all runs; 1/4:

Oxidant: Mackroom 0.05 M in 1 AF; 0.01 M in 1AB
Flow Ratio: 1 Feed; 1 Scrub; 4 Extractant
Hexone: Pretreated Special Shell
Activity: 2 X slugs dissolving per run

1/1					1AX	AX Losses		Overall Decontamination Factors				
Run	, ט	H	AL.	H	H	٠.				1		
No.	(M)	(H)	(M)	(H)	(H)	% ₹	₹ Pu	GΣβ	I.Cy	Ruß_	СЪВ	Zrß
ANL Y	lowshe	et:	ľ]		!						
35 ⁸	2.0	0.26	1.3	-0.05	0.5	0.07	0.012	40	90	270	160	60
37 ^Ъ	1.9	0.25	1.3	0.04	0.5	6,60	0.01	470	160	650	440	50
ORUL.	1 710	rsbeet:							İ			
34°	1.8	-0.4	2.0	-0.25	0.0	0.29	0.50	6150	1940	1120	25000	5180
36 [®]	2.0	-0.15	2.0	-0.21	0.0	0.46	0.09	4340	1880	440	2300#	630*
	360		· 0.	tuents 1 M Mal by vol 5% by 1	ios en	1 1% by	y volu				t;	
ANL Y	lovabe	pt (Alt	hout	ozidat:	ion):							
2	2	0.25	1.3	0.06	0.5	0.25		120	60	8	370	100
ORMIL	fi ne	waheet:								ļ		
24/25	1.9	-0.2	2.0	-0.2	0.0	0.1	0.04	5000	900	130	-	-

^{*} These factors are considered doubtful. No reasonable explanation has been found yet for the large discrepancy.



21





4.0 Motal Recovery

4.1 Uranyl Assonium Phosphate Precipitation Process Development

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In the wanyl assemium phosphate precipitation process, the use of diamentum phosphate instead of assemium nitrate as the precipitant was demonstrated with the composite Hanford waste yielding in two precipitation cycles gross fission product decontamination factor of 1.5x10³ with an 0.75% uranium loss. These runs were made in the laboratory on a 500 milliliter scale. The results were similar to the results obtained with the supermatant of the Hanford waste. K-25 demonstrated that when assemium nitrate was used as the precipitant, the uranium loss was approximately 15% which will require a recycle step for adequate uranium recovery. K-25 has requested that the emphasis be placed on the assemium nitrate procedure because the crystals obtained using diamenium phosphate were not retained on 700m60 filter screen. He further laboratory development at CERL is planned.

The equipment for the Semi-Works demonstration of the uranyl ammonium phosphate process for recovery of the uranium from the Emmford metal waste tanks has been installed. The equipment is now being tested and calibrated. The completion date for this study will be August 1, 1949.

Since all previous uranyl ammonium phosphate work at CEML was done on Banford or synthetic supermatant, it was deemed advisable to investigate the behavior of feeds which approximated Hanford total waste. To simulate these solutions, Hanford supermatant was butted with additional uranium and non-uranium salts. These feeds are designated semi-hot total alkaline waste to conform with K-25's nomenclature. Concentration of the various ions are as follows: U 55.5 mg/ml, CO₃ 52.8 mg/ml, NO₃ 46.5 mg/ml, SO_h 23 mg/ml, PO_h 03.5 mg/ml, and NO₂ 0.3 mg/ml.



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patible with good uranium yield and fission product decontamination, several 25 ml scale runs were made. Results of these experiments indicate that 55 g (MH_k)₂ HPO_k per cycle is necessary. To further test this procedure, three test this procedure, three dicate a uranium loss through two cycles, including washing, of <0.75% with beta and gamma decontamination factors of 1.7x10³ and 1.6x10³.

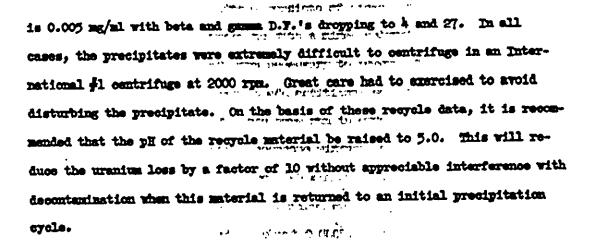
Use of the reducing agents, ferrous ammonium sulfate and hydrazine hydrate, and the oxidizing agent, periodic acid, in concentrations of 0.05 M was investigated as an aid in improving the decontamination in uranyl ammonium phosphate precipitation from Europe Supernatant solutions with displaced ammonium phosphate. Their use was also investigated in wash solutions for removal of the mother liquor from the precipitated uranyl ammonium phosphate. To significant improvement was shown.

On precipitating uranyl ammonium phosphate with ammonium nitrate (K-25 procedure) from Hanford supernatant, the uranium loss in the first cycle is about 3.5% and about 10% in the second cycle. This high loss necessitates a recycle process for the recovery of uranium from these filtrates. The recycle procedure sensists of adjusting the amidity with HU_OH as Rach-ta ph 2.0, contributing, washing the precipitate and transferring a solution of the precipitate in HWO₂ to a subsequent first cycle precipitation.

Laboratory experiments to determine uranium losses in the recycle phase indicate 0.05 mg/ml at pH 2.0 with beta and gamma decontamination factors of 80 and 285, respectively. At pH 3.0 the beta and gamma decontamination factors are 7 and 65 with a uranium loss of 0.006 mg/ml. The uranium loss at pH 5.0



My 4, 1949



4.2 Solvent Extraction Process Development

A solvent extraction process is being developed for recovery of the premium from the metal waste tanks at CHRL and Hamford. The process, now in the preliminary laboratory stage, consists of dissolving the metal waste in nitric soid and solvent extracting with a mixed solvent, hamne and tributyl phosphate. It has not been necessary to remove the phosphate and sulfate ion before extraction nor to add additional salting agent.

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During the month, batch tests were run in order to determine the optimum composition of hemme-tributyl phosphate mixture for the solvent. It is indicated that the mixture is between 70% and 80% hemme. An aqueous phase 3 M in MRO₃ would give a uranium distribution coefficient of about 2 and a beta distribution coefficient of about 0.0005. A study made to check the effect of nitric acid, showed an increase in both uranium distribution coefficient and separation from beta until the acid in the aqueous feeds exceeds 4 M.

Two counter-current runs were made using 60% hexane - 40% tributyl



May 4, 1949

phosphate mixture as the organic feed. The aqueous feed in the first run was & N in nitric acid. Seven extraction stages and six scrub stages were used. It was found that the uranium distribution coefficient did not decrease on subsequent extractions; gross beta decontamination was 5000 and the uranium loss was 0.07%. The second run was made with the aqueous feed 3.2 N in nitric acid and the organic 0.91 N in nitric acid. Distilled water was used as scrub. A uranium loss of 0.3%, 3.4 decontamination for scrub-

5.0 Waste Disposal

5.1 Decontamination of Halfo from ORGIL

bing and overall decontamination of 3400 were obtained.

After the evaporation of radiochemical waste, further concentration of the concentrated evaporator liquor may be obtained by crystallizing out the sodium nitrate.

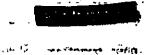
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A total decontamination factor of 1.8x10⁵ has been attained for three crystallizations from nitric acid with less than 100 cts/ml/min at 10% geometry in the final concentrated salt solution.

Decontemination is also satisfactory by crystallizing in the presence of as little as 0.01 M acid but is not adapted to batch operation because of the high salt loss in the mother liquor. Decontamination factors of 10 to 300 have been obtained per crystallizations on laboratory and semi-works filters. The inconsistent decontaminations per cycle are believed to be due to poor mechanical separation of crystals and liquor and incomplete washings. At lease two and probably three crystallizations will be necessary to reduce the activity in the salt to a disposable level. Apparently no fission products





are quantitatively carried by the salt but both ruthenium and columbium are in greater relative abundance than in the feed.

Crystallization of sodium nitrate has been successful from W-6 concentrate after separation of insoluble solids. The bulk of the aluminum and sulfate concentrates in the first mother liquor and the bulk of the chloride crystallizes with the nitrate. Major effort in the next period will be concentrated on operating procedure and equipment design for a semi-works descentration of W-6 crystallization. Also further laboratory runs will be made to determine ion distribution in W-6 and Eunford type waste.

5.2 Condensate Decontamination by Ion Exchange

Similated waste evaporator condensate runs have been continued on the 1-1/2" x 2' cation and anion exchange beds. Using W-6 waste diluted 10 times with desineralized water with added X-metal solution as a source of activity, 97% to 99% adsorption of activity has been maintained over 5000 bed volumes of feed without signs of breakthru. To simplify equipment design, the reactivation solutions have been fed in the same direction as the feed without any apparent effect on decontamination. At 5000 gallons per day of condensate from the tank farm evaporator, a minimum diameter of about 8" would be required. The column length is not too critical but should be something in the order of 4 to 8 feet. An activity breakthru point has not yet been reached but from present data columns 8" x 6' will run two weeks without saturating the resin.

Since the evaporator condensate activity will be largely volatile icdine, runs were made with icdine tracer oxidized to I₂ with browine. An earlier



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27

May 4, 1949

run on a laboratory scale gave a decontamination factor of 200 on IRA 400 amberlite anion resin. Ten millicuries of lodine tracer in the I₂ form in 200 l of solution was fed to the 1-1/2" x 2' Dowex 80 and A-2 resin columns with only a fraction of the activity adsorbing. The results were unexpected on the basis of the laboratory runs. Further laboratory tests will be made. The mechanism of I₂ adsorption is reaction with the benzene structure of the resins rather than ion exchange. The Dow resins are not of the phenolic type as are the Amberlites which may account for the discrepancy in adsorption results.

Future runs will be made with W-6 solution diluted 103 with demineralized water instead of 104 in order to determine an activity breakthrupoint.

6.0 Barium 140 Separation Development - Ion Exchange Study

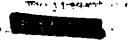
Two ion exchange processes are under development for the improvement of Barium 140 yield.

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I Citrate - Acetate Process

This process would follow the present electrolysis and evaporation step replacing the other hydrochloride extraction and would effect the separation of Pb, Fe, and other lesser impurities from the Barium 140. The steps in this process are as follows:

- (1) Take the Da(HO3)2 up in 0.5 M citric acid and pass through a Dowex 50 resin column where the cations are adsorbed.
- (2) Elute with 0.5 M ammonium citrate, pH 3, to remove Fe
- (3) Elute with 1 M ammonium accetate pH 6.0 to remove Pb, Cr, Sr, Hi
- (4) Elute the Barius 140 in a small volume of 6 H HCL.



· 28

A trial run using this procedure showed Dower 50 resin to be unsuitable because of its slow diffusion rate. As a result, the elutions to remove impurities were cut short because of time limitations. The results showed a 90% yield of Ba, and removal of the following percentages of impurities: Pb, 16%; Fe, 82%; Cr, 77%; Ni, 100%. Qualitative runs using IR 105 resin have shown it to have a much faster diffusion rate than Dower 50. Puture runs will be made with IR 105 resin and higher molarity of eluting agents.

II Alkaline Process

This process would replace both the electrolysis and other extraction steps in the present Rela process. The present electrolysis procedure, while adequate in theory, actually leaves up to 1 gm of Pb with the Barium.

The steps in the proposed ion exchange process are as follows:

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- (1) A'd enough 0.5 M HaOH to hold the Pb in solution as the plumbate and pass through a Dower 50 resin column. The barium is adsorbed on the resin while the plumbate anion passes through the column.
- (2) Remove impurities by citrate and acetate elution as in process I.
- (3) Klute Barium 140 in a small volume of 6 H Hil.

A tracer run using this procedure on 1/10 the ionic barium concentration of the present Rala process has been made. 99.5% of the Pb was separated from the barium. Barium yield was ca. 67%. Refinement of technique and use of IR 105 resin should improve these figures.

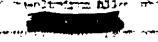
7.0 "25" Development - Metal Solution Crud Removal

Filtration of the solution of a fuel assembly for the proposed Huclear Reactor Development Reactor was most satisfactorily carried out using a



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May 4, 1949



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29

700 x 60 mesh stainless steel cloth with 25 milligrams per square centimeter of Johns Manville Celite 545 filter aid preceat, and approximately five grams per liter of the filter aid alumnied in the metal solution to be filtered. To recover uranium, the filter cake was washed with two 10% volumes of 3 molar nitric acid at 55°C removing 3.87% uranium. The filter cake was then washed with two 5% volumes of 70% nitric acid removing 0.1% uranium.

The wranium 235 from the spent fuel assemblies from the Nuclear Resortor Development Reactor is recovered by dissolving the assembly in nitric acid and solvent extracting the wranium. The solution of the assembly contains insoluble material, a silicon-aluminum alloy which would interfere with the solvent extraction process and must therefore be removed.

The "crud" (silicon-aluminum alloy) was examined under the optical microscope and a photomicrograph at 100% was made. The particles were irregularly shaped, varying from notched alongated needles to fragment like plates, ranging in size from 10 microns to 500 microns.

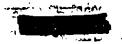
Filtration tests using sintered stainless steel filter mediums with and without filter aid were not satisfactory.

8.0 Dry Fluoride Development

A small scale fluorinator has been built for use in studying the direct fluorination of cold uranium metal. The fluorinator consists of 3/4" nickel tube with a resistance heater wound around the outside. This assembly fits into a section of 3 inch black iron pipe which is used as a cooling water jacket.



May 4, 1949



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30

A chemical tray for removing fluorine from the off-gas is now being fabricated. About three feet of nickel capillary tubing needed for control of fluorine flow has been located.

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As soon as the new laboratory space in the Semi-Works is ready for occupancy, it is planned to assemble the fluorination equipment in one of the stainless steel hoods located there. At the present rate of progress it will be about the middle of key or the first of June before any experimental work may be done. In the meantime, the survey of available information will continue.

9.0 Protective Coatings for Concrete Surfaces

The chemical resistance of 64 commercially available paints to become and three molar solutions of nitric acid, hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, and sodium hydroxide was determined. None of the paints successfully withstood the attack of all the reagents.

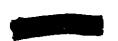
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One coating, a rubber like material, Research Sample J-653, resisted hamme satisfactorily but failed against 3 M MaOH and 3 M HMO₃ in 96 hours and 160 hours, respectively. Two other coatings, however, Deven Resin Solution K-5925 and Spraylat SC-1054, resisted hamme for twenty-four hours.

On the basis of these chemical tests, the following contings are considered useful for protecting concrete surfaces from the chemical reagents tested: (1) Devan Resin Solution N-5925, (2) Research Sample J-653,

- (3) Americat -31, (4) Corrosite Plastic Coating, 8228, (5) Americat -55,
- (6) Bisonite M-100 and M-101, (7) Ucilon 400-9.

A final evaluation of the coatings will be made upon completion of



31

decontamination and susceptibility tests by Bizzell of the Biology Division.

The coatings selected must then be tested for wearing qualities to define their field of application.