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14 March 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Administrative Staff, OHR

THROUGH: Chief, Economic Research Area, OHR

FROM: Chief, Materials Division, OHR

SUBJECT: Control of overtime

REFERENCE: Memo from AD/HR to Chief, D/M, same subject,
dated 10 March 1958.

1. It is the policy of this division to discourage the use of overtime as far as possible and to tailor our workload to the amount of time available during the regular working day. The branches have been made aware that overtime is not designed to provide a regular cushion for additional work, but to take care of unforeseen contingencies or particular pressures at particular times. At the same time, I believe that no operation such as ours can ever completely eliminate overtime, and that the use of overtime is preferable to sacrificing quality or failing to meet important deadlines.

2. I personally examine the bi-weekly requests from the branches for the authorization of overtime work. Each request is checked against the project for which it is to be used, and I determine whether the overtime should be expended in the light of the project priority and its due date. I have on numerous occasions refused to authorize overtime when I thought it unnecessary.

3. I do not personally approve each individual use of overtime once it has been authorized. I have, however, instructed my Administrative Assistant to refer to me any requests for overtime not specifically authorized in advance.

4. During calendar year 1957, this Division used slightly more than 1100 hours of overtime. Of this total, some 600 hours was used by a single branch, the Agriculture Branch. Until recently, this branch was seriously under strength. Moreover, it has for the


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past 2½ years been subjected to unusual pressures of high priority work. The branch continues to be subjected to such pressures, as a result of important agricultural developments in the USSR, and is still using considerable overtime on priority work. The branch is now, however, at strength. We hope to reach an even keel by the beginning of fiscal 1959, and to reduce the use of overtime thereafter. I think it must be recognized, however, that our ability to do this will be influenced by circumstances beyond our control.

5. Referenced memo notes that the use of overtime has been increasing even though OPR is closer to authorized strength than at any time in the past. It should also be noted, however, that (1) we are now relatively "fatter" in clerical strength than in professional strength, (2) not all sections or branches are at strength, (3) work pressures have particular impact in particular places, and not a uniform impact across the board.

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