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Contract Files

EWM: smh
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3 October 1945

Subject: Uranium contained in the Iowa State College dump.

MEMORANDUM to the Files.

9/27/48
(Date)

1. Scrap materials as slag, waste lime and graphite obtained in the production of metal at Iowa State College during the early period of operation in 1942 and early 1943 were discarded in an area called the Iowa State College dump instead of being saved for recovery operations. In the Summer of 1943 it was realized by this office that considerable uranium-bearing material was probably present in this dump and should be recovered. In the Fall of 1943 approximately 250 tons of material was removed from the dump, barreled, and shipped to the du Pont Recovery Plant. The richest deposits were recovered and operations were confined to a single small area in the dump where it was known concentrated materials had been discarded.

2. In October 1944, the undersigned visited Iowa State College for the purpose of following up on several open accountability items, and in the course of this visit observed the Iowa State College dump. Two areas at each end of the dump, roughly 30 to 40 yards square each, showed yellow and greenish surface coloration, indicating the presence of uranium-containing salts. It seemed desirable to systematically sample these areas to determine whether concentrations of uranium were high enough to warrant further excavation. Arrangements were made to have a scale map of the dump made up and locations were determined for drilling with an earth auger for the taking of approximately 50 samples at varying depths in the ground. In the course of the next six months a total of 36 samples were taken. Some were analyzed by the Ames laboratory, some by Princeton, and some by the National Bureau of Standards. With a very few exceptions, the values showed less than .1% metal. These values were plotted in a scale map of the areas and where values greater than .1% had been indicated, further composites of these smaller areas were taken for check analyses. The check analyses showed values less than .1%.

3. Because composite sampling and analytical work did not show any concentrations of uranium of any consequence, this area has not been further excavated. The processing of the original 250 tons of material at du Pont has shown much higher contents than originally anticipated, and it is indicated that the bulk of the discarded material was obtained from the original excavation.

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By Ted Davis Date 8-29-85

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