Quoting at Random

The great importance of nuclear power to solve energy problems of the future was shortly underlined by twenty-eight eminent US scientists, including 10 Nobel prize winners, who published on 16 January 1975 a statement on energy policy. Here is the part of the statement that deals specifically with nuclear power:

"The U.S. choice is not coal or uranium: we need both. Coal is irreplaceable as the basis of new synthetic fuels to replace oil and natural gas. However, we see the primary use of solid fuels, especially of uranium, as a source of electricity. Uranium power, the culmination of basic discoveries in physics, is an engineered reality generating electricity today. Nuclear power has its critics, but we believe they lack perspective as to the feasibility of nonnuclear power sources and the gravity of the fuel crisis. All energy release involves risks and nuclear power is certainly no exception. The safety of civilian nuclear power has been under public surveillance without parallel in the history of technology. As in any new technology, there is a learning period. Contrary to the scare publicity given to some mistakes that have occurred, no appreciable amount of radioactive material has escaped from any commercial U.S. power reactor. We have confidence that technical ingenuity and care in operation can continue to improve the safety in all phases of the nuclear power program, including the difficult areas of transportation and nuclear waste disposal. The separation of the Atomic Energy Commission into the Energy Research & Development Administration and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission provides added reassurance for realistic management of potential risks and benefits. On any scale the benefits of a clean, inexpensive, and inexhaustible domestic fuel far outweigh the possible risks. We can see no reasonable alternative to an increased use of nuclear power to satisfy our energy needs.

"Many of us have worked for a long time on energy problems and therefore we feel the responsibility to speak out. The energy famine that threatens will require many sacrifices on the part of the American people, but these will be reduced if we marshal the huge scientific and technical resources of our country to improve the use of known energy sources".

The Nobel prize winners who have signed the statement, in addition to Bethe, include Luis W. Alvarez, Lawrence Berkeley Lag (physics); John Bardeen, Univ. of Illinois (physics); Felix Bloch, Stanford Univ. (physics); Joshua Lederberg, Stanford (physiology and medicine); Willard F. Libby, Univ. of California at Los Angeles (chemistry); Edward M. Mc Millan, Univ. of California (chemistry); Edward M. Purcell, Harvard Univ. (physics); I.I. Rabi, professor emeritus at Columbia Univ. (physics); and Glenn T. Seaborg, Univ. of California (chemistry). Other signatories include Peter L. Auer, Cornell; Robert F. Bacher, California Institute of Technology; Norris E. Bradbury, former director of the Los Alamos Scientific Lab; Harold Brown, president of Cal Tech; Cyril S. Comar, Cornell; Arthur Kantrowitz, Avco-Everett Research Lab; Ralph Lapp; Franklin Long, Cornell; Norman Rasmussen, MIT; Roger Revelle, Harvard Center for Population Studies; Frederick Seitz, president of Rockefeller Univ.; Edward Teller, Univ. of California; James A. Van Allen, Univ. of Iowa; Warren Weaver, mathematician from New Milford, Conn.; Alvin M. Weinberg, former director, Oak Ridge National Lab; Victor F. Weisskopf, MIT; Edward Wenk, Univ. of Washington; and Richard Wilson, Harvard Univ.