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February 12, 2001

J. Robert Cooke, Dean
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Dear Bob,

Thanks for the information on Ward Center.

Some time ago, I was asked to provide commentary on the situation from my perspective (then) as Director of the Cornell Center for Materials Research. Since Advanced Materials is one of the major thrust areas for the future, as announced by the University, it occurred to me that this matter should be looked at from the standpoint of future promise. There is very substantial capital and other investment in this Center and it struck me then, as it does now, that if there is indeed promise for resurgence in matters nuclear, and the DOE seems to strongly hold that this is the case, then precipitous closure now may not be well advised. And given that the shutdown costs are quoted as being in the vicinity of \$4m (we will be fortunate indeed if we can do this for so "little") the case for continuance of a well funded center looks even more compelling if funding is considered to be a key issue.

You probably saw in the Ithaca Journal on Saturday that the DOE is reconsidering the resurgence of nuclear power. Whether one likes this or not, it seems inevitable (as Bethe predicted) given the demands for energy and the rising concerns about global warming. With it must come the training and research functions and hence the eventual answer to the valid concerns about the decline in our Nuclear Engineering program.

The recent appearance of the Ward Center issue on the agendas of your upcoming meetings comes at a bad time for me, since I have reviews away from Cornell, planned long ago. Accordingly I take the liberty of attaching a copy of my letter to the LAC, which provides more detail. But as you will see, a major point is simply to draw attention to the possibility that we might well be repenting at leisure if we now proceed to enact a closure with undue haste.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



N.W. Ashcroft
Horace White Professor of Physics

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CC: Letter to LAC