

"The existence of large quantities of high level radioactive wastes, such as would be produced in a major atomic power industry, would create a very special problem in that the amounts of long-lived materials at any one time would be sufficient to seriously contaminate very large regions of the Earth for centuries to come.

This statement is made simply to emphasize the fact that if we were to go on for 50 years in the atomic power industry, and find that we had reached an impasse, that we had been doing the wrong thing with the wastes and we would like to reconsider the disposal methods, it would be entirely too late, because the problem would exist and nothing could be done to change that fact, for the next, say 600 or a thousand years."

- L.P. Hatch, Brookhaven National Laboratory, testimony before the U.S. Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, January 30, 1959.