

PEACEFUL SCIENCE: APPLIED VS. BASIC RESEARCH

Cleanup technology was only one of many ways the Department of Energy's national laboratories and other research facilities sought to respond to the end of the Cold War by diversifying and seeking new research roles. With the new administration emphasizing jobs and the economy, Secretary O'Leary attempted to steer the Department's efforts toward greater applied research. Technology transfer from the laboratories to private industry was the perceived key. Although the Department under President Bush had pushed hard for technology transfer, President Clinton and Secretary O'Leary appeared even more committed to hastening the process. Under authority of the National Competitiveness Technology Transfer Act of 1989, Admiral Watkins had overseen the implementation of more than 300 Cooperative Research and Development Agreements

(CRADAs) between the Department and industry, academia, state governments, and others. During O'Leary's first year, the number of negotiated CRADAs doubled. O'Leary also increased technology transfer spending by 68 percent and decreed that the laboratories should devote at least 10 percent of their budgets to technology transfer.²⁷²

Emphasis on technology transfer raised fears that basic research at the Department consequently would suffer. The administration in its fiscal year 1994 budget request proposed an increase of only three percent for basic research in the civilian sector. For the Department, this meant less-than-projected funding for basic research programs such as high energy physics. Building projects, including the superconducting super collider (SSC), would be "stretched out." For the super collider, the Department estimated a reduction in planned outlays through fiscal year 1998 resulting in a three-year delay in schedule and a \$2 billion increase in project cost.²⁷³



Secretary O'Leary delivers keynote address at the Hanford Summit, a conference with Department of Energy "stakeholders" on environment, technology, and the economy. The conference was held September 14-15, 1993, at Kennewick, WA.

Source: Westinghouse Hanford Company