

was no indication that warheads had deteriorated. In the administration debate, O'Leary then joined with Thomas Graham, acting director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and John Gibbons, White House science adviser, in advocating a "no-first-test" policy. It was this position that President Clinton adopted. On July 3, Clinton announced that he was extending the testing moratorium for at least fifteen months. He called on other nations to observe a similar moratorium while negotiating a permanent test ban. The President also stated that the United States would "explore other means" than testing to maintain the safety, reliability, and performance of the nuclear arsenal.<sup>288</sup>

Clinton's announcement was a personal victory for O'Leary. As Deputy Energy Secretary William White explained, laboratory officials in the past frequently predominated not only in technical matters but also in budget priorities and policy disputes. The testing announcement signaled a different approach. "The administration," White proclaimed, "is proud that it is not letting the laboratories manage the Department." Current departmental leadership, he added, viewed the practice of deferring to the laboratories as a mistake that had led to "debacles" like the Strategic Defense Initiative program. Although committed to maintaining a cadre of top laboratory scientists, White observed, the administration would make sure their work was subordinated to "national interests such as nonproliferation" and maintaining a smaller nuclear arsenal.<sup>289</sup>

## NUCLEAR WEAPONS: BEYOND THE COLD WAR

Secretary O'Leary on the nuclear testing issue had publicly distanced herself from the weapons culture within the Department of Energy. Nonetheless, nuclear weapons and the need to maintain and equip those weapons would not soon go away. Long-term national security strategy still assumed the existence of a nuclear deterrent. Like it or not, the Department would be deeply involved in the nuclear weapons business for the foreseeable future. Both the administration and O'Leary were well

aware of this. In his testing announcement, President Clinton directed the Department to maintain a capability to resume testing in the event another nation did so first. The wisdom of taking a precautionary approach was made clear only three months later when China, in spite of considerable urging—some of which came from O'Leary—to forego testing, on October 4 detonated underground a nuclear device. Ignoring the provocation to immediately resume testing, Clinton issued a directive to the Department to maintain readiness to test. O'Leary agreed that this was "prudent and necessary."<sup>290</sup>

What remained at issue was the ultimate size and capability of the nuclear arsenal needed in the post-Cold War environment. Two major studies of the Nation's future nuclear strategy and capability were pending. The Defense Department was undertaking a "comprehensive study of U.S. Nuclear forces," and the National Security Council was analyzing how far below the START II limit of 3500 strategic warheads the United States could safely go.

The size and configuration of the Department's nuclear weapons production complex, however, was only partially dependent on the outcome of such studies. Whatever the size of the arsenal, any ongoing capability would require a certain minimal complex. During the Bush Administration, the Department lost the capability to produce nuclear weapons because of safety and environmental problems. Rocky Flats and other key facilities had been permanently shut down. The main defense function the Department was involved in during O'Leary's first year was the dismantlement of some 1700 warheads. Nonetheless, Pentagon planning called for enough production capability to "allow additional forces to be reconstituted in the event of a threatening reversal of events." And Robert W. DeGrasse, Jr., an advisor on nuclear weapons, confirmed to reporters that the Defense Department "has talked to us about maintaining the capability of doing small-scale production." DeGrasse added that the Department was "being asked to maintain a small production capability without knowing specifically what we'll be asked to produce." At the same time, critics