

issues. Republicans on Capitol Hill were generally favorable, although some had misgivings. Senator Pete V. Domenici (R-NM), for example, hailed the strategy as an “important first step” but said that it could be improved if it contained an oil import fee and stronger conservation incentives.²⁰⁴

In spite of the passions engendered in interest groups and on the Hill, and even though energy supply played a major role in the Gulf war, the public itself was largely apathetic on energy issues. A public opinion poll found that only 12 percent of those surveyed rated energy as one of their three most important areas of concern. By contrast, 36 percent claimed environmental protection as among their top concerns. With public sentiment wavering, Congressman Sharp noted, Congress was not in a position to make the United States energy-independent. But “incremental progress,” he quickly added, “is still progress.”²⁰⁵

Nearly three-quarters of the National Energy Strategy measures could be carried out without congressional action. Legislation, nonetheless, was “essential” to fully achieve the plan’s objectives. On March 4, 1991, Watkins transmitted the administration’s comprehensive bill to the House and Senate. This soon languished, but many National Energy Strategy measures were included in an omnibus energy bill co-sponsored by Johnston and Senator Malcolm Wallop (R-WV), the Energy Committee’s ranking Republican. In late May, the committee approved the Johnston-Wallop bill—the first comprehensive energy package reported by the committee in a decade. President Bush praised the legislation, and Watkins hailed it as “a monumental achievement.” Opponents, however, criticized the bill as being too pro-production. The bill opened Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration and eased controls on the nuclear, gas pipeline, and electric industries. The bill did not contain stricter CAFE standards, but Johnston promised to introduce such standards before the full Senate. Nonetheless, when the bill came to the Senate floor in October, a group of senators backed by consumer and environmental organizations launched a filibuster. An attempt to defeat the filibuster fell ten votes short. Deputy Secretary Moore urged Johnston to



Deputy Secretary W. Henson Moore (left) examines ground zero prior to the Distant Zenith nuclear weapons effects test at the Nevada Test Site.

Source: Johnson Controls World Services Inc., Mercury, NV

seek a second vote on cloture, but the senator conceded defeat and offered to discuss a compromise with opponents to the bill.²⁰⁶

THE WEAPONS COMPLEX AND THE END OF THE COLD WAR

In November 1990 President Bush formally declared that the Cold War was over. A dizzying series of events, including the breaching of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, and the reunification of Germany, had heralded the end of the four-decade long struggle. More surprises followed as the world witnessed the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself in fall 1991. These events, coupled with ever more dramatic arms control initiatives, had an impact, as Admiral Watkins observed, felt around the world, across the Nation, and particularly at the Department of Energy.²⁰⁷

The impact of the end of the Cold War fell most directly on the Department’s national security programs. The *2010 Report* on the modernization of the nuclear weapons complex, submitted to Congress in January 1989, assumed, among other things, a relatively constant nuclear weapons program. The rapidly evolving international situation, however, soon called this assumption into