The decision to end nuclear testing marked the transition from the first nuclear age to the second, and to a global security regime dominated by concerns about nuclear proliferation rather than by an arms race between two superpowers. It was by no means a foregone conclusion that nuclear testing would end. Based on interviews with top decision-makers, as well as ethnographic fieldwork at the nuclear weapons laboratories, this talk explains how the decision was made to end nuclear testing. It also explores the implications of this decision for nuclear deterrence and for the nuclear weapons laboratories.

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