

*OTA forum on
technology and governance
in the 1990s*

Twenty years ago, Congress created the Office of Technology Assessment to demystify the roles of science and technology in governance—to make specialized information more accessible. For two decades, during which time the influence of technology has grown enormously, OTA has examined key socio-technical issues of our time, providing detailed information to congressional committees and other policy makers.

On January 27, 1993, in celebration of OTA's twentieth anniversary, the Technology Assessment Board hosted a one-day Forum on Technology and

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Governance in the 1990s for members of Congress and key congressional staff. The Forum was designed to address several goals:

- To raise congressional and public awareness of the most critical issues faced by our nation and the world.
- To equip policy makers with an improved understanding of how best to deal with these issues.
- To show how technology is woven into socio-economic, domestic, and international policies, and to demonstrate the need to adapt our policies, methods of governance, and institutional mechanisms to this reality.

Five topics were chosen, selected on the basis of national and/or global urgency, likely continued importance to the legislative agenda, and the centrality of technology in creating or solving the problem: international security; sustaining the global environment; U.S. economic competitiveness; health care; and public education. Distinguished speakers were invited to address the topics—

outlining the problems, the reasons for their urgency, and alternatives for resolution. The following is the list of papers presented:

A New World Order and Its Implications for Arms Reductions

Robert S. McNamara
Former U.S. Secretary of Defense
Former President,
The World Bank

■ Sustaining the Global Environment

Gro Harlem Brundtland
Prime Minister of Norway
Chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development

■ Economic Competitiveness in the U.S.

Laura D'Andrea Tyson,
Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors

■ Medical Care Reform:
Building a Viable System
Arnold S. Relman
Professor of Medicine and of Social Medicine, Harvard School of Medicine
Editor-in-Chief Emeritus
New England Journal of Medicine

■ Rethinking Public Education in the U.S.

Derek Bok
President Emeritus, Harvard University

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