

APPENDIXES

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Report of the Outgoing Chairman of the Board

Senator Edward M. Kennedy

1978 was a productive year at OTA. In this, the sixth year of OTA's young life, impressive and exciting progress has been made in its mission to assist Congress evaluate the problems and opportunities facing our Nation as a result of rapid technological change. Strong leadership and new initiatives have expanded the scope and perfected the quality of OTA studies, and the process by which this quality is achieved. Throughout this past year, I believe OTA has made great strides in our unique and urgent role to provide Congress with an objective and informed view of the impact of technology on our society.

Leadership

As Chairman of the Technology Assessment Board in 1978, I had the chance to work closely with Congressman Larry Winn, Jr., of Kansas as the Vice-Chairman of the Board. Larry brought to the Board the kind of nonpartisan common sense and absolute commitment to the realization of OTA's goals that made our joint leadership of the Board a special opportunity for me. We on the Board owe Larry our appreciation for his time and his wisdom.

Dr. Jerome Wiesner continued as Chairman of the Technology Assessment Advisory Council during 1978. Jerry has tirelessly supported and directed efforts to reshape and refine the role of the Council. He has fused the Council into a uniquely effective advisory group, bringing it together into a vigorous, action-oriented group of experts from every field of science and technology. Jerry has been an extraordinary link between the Council, the Board, and the Office with his good will, his fine sense of humor, and his vision and judgment. To him and to the other members of the Council, there is no way to express our gratitude adequately. All of the mem-

bers are extremely busy members of their own communities, and each has taken the time to give OTA the benefit of their shared experience and expertise.

Dr. Russell W. Peterson became Director of OTA in January 1978, and; by the close of the year, the Office's resources had been redirected, its staff reorganized, and its goals more clearly defined, as a result of his dedicated leadership and hard work.

Director Peterson asked for and received from the Board authority to administer the Office and its staff in a more efficient and effective way. He conceived and directed a priority-setting process for OTA. He brought OTA through a difficult transition from an infant agency to a highly respected support agency of Congress.

Mr. Daniel De Simone, the Deputy Director, continued in 1978 the same high quality and respected service to OTA he has given since its establishment. Dan has assisted Board members, the Council, staff members, and two Directors with enthusiasm and vigor, and the Board deeply appreciates his continued commitment.

During 1978, there were several changes in the membership of the Technology Assessment Board. The Board lost one of its beloved spokesmen, Senator Hubert Humphrey, who had served on the Board from its beginning.

Hubert's concern was global yet sensitive—a perspective that he applied to so many of our national issues. With this personal perspective, Hubert's guiding hand and influence contributed to the building of OTA.

In the food area, Hubert worked closely with the OTA staff to develop our Food program. He was concerned that our Nation's food policy was fragmented, and he was quick to note that this

was also the case in other areas—for example, in energy and health care areas. He did not impose his personal philosophy or policies upon OTA, but urged us to consider alternative solutions, make the commitment, and put the resources behind it. Hubert's philosophy and his influence and inspiration remain with us.

Clifford Case, who had served both as a member and Vice-Chairman of the Board during his tenure, left the Board at the end of his term in 1978. Cliff brought to the Board a sense of bi-partisanship that was and is crucial to OTA's effectiveness and growth. He gave an enormous amount of his time to our nationwide search for a new Director. Cliff's participation on the Technology Assessment Board was appreciated and will be missed.

The Board also lost the services of Congressman Olin Teague, who retired in 1978 at the end of his term. "Tiger" Teague, perhaps more than any other individual, is responsible for the new direction at OTA. He worked hard to establish OTA; he served as chairman of the Board during a difficult growth period for the Office. As Chairman of the House Committee on Science and Technology, he conducted hearings on OTA during 1978 that highlighted the fine tuning the Office needed, suggested realistic solutions to its problems, and articulated the potential impact of this support agency. He is a good friend to all of us, and I am hopeful we will be able to continue to call on him for his valued advice and support.

The Technology Assessment Board welcomed Senator Adlai Stevenson to the Board in 1978. In his short period of Board membership, Adlai has already had a very positive impact on OTA policy. He brings to the Board a long-standing interest and expertise in science and technology issues.

New Directions

Board/Council Joint Meeting. On September 18, 1978, for the first time in 4 years, the Technology Assessment Board and the Technology Assessment Advisory Council participated in

a joint session to discuss OTA's mandate and how best to meet the goals set for the Office by Congress. This meeting was much more than the symbolic coming together of the Board and Council members. All the participants had the opportunity to hear and respond to the recommendations by leaders in the private sector and Members of Congress on a range of projects that would be helpful to Congress. Members of the Board and Advisory Council discussed, as well, the role of the Council and the issue of allocating resources between long- and short-range projects. I am hopeful that in the future joint working sessions will continue to mold a close working relationship between the Board and the Council.

House Hearings. Congressman Olin Teague, Chairman of the House Committee on Science and Technology, initiated a series of hearings in 1978 in the Subcommittee on Science, Research, and Technology into the purposes of the Technology Assessment Act of 1972, possible problems in fulfilling those intentions, and potential improvements to enhance OTA's effectiveness. No one is better qualified to define these issues than Congressman Teague and his able staff assistants, John Holmfeld and Phil Yeager. Mr. Yeager, who drafted much of the Organic Act and contributed greatly to the legislative history, assisted members of the subcommittee in their development of recommendations for improving OTA's effectiveness.

As Chairman of the Board, I made several recommendations during testimony before the Subcommittee on October 4, 1977, and March 22, 1978, including:

- 1) the Technology Assessment Board, the policymaking body of OTA, should turn its attention and energy to directing an examination of long-range issues, including the secondary impacts of emerging technologies;
- 2) the Board should adopt a new policy regarding staff hiring, promotion policies, and other administrative matters in order to free Board time for policy issues; and
- 3) the Council should exercise a quality control function by continuing to develop cri-

teria and methodology to better design our assessments and evaluate the results.

These recommendations, endorsed by others on the Board and the Council, were supported by the Committee, and have been undertaken at OTA.

The Committee report concluded:

OTA has been set up to do a job for the Congress which is (a) essential: (b) not capable of being duplicated by other legislative entities: and (c) proving useful and is already relied upon

OTA should retain its basic operating method of depending to a large extent on out-of-house professional assistance in performing its assessments.

Continued Congressional support for OTA is warranted,

The study by the House Science Subcommittee on Science, Research, and Technology, together with its recommendations, is the beacon and the guidebook for the definition of OTA's mission and the refining of its procedures.

Outreach to Congress

Under Director Peterson's leadership, a new program to reach out to Congress was developed in 1978. Quicker, more efficient methods of communicating with Members of Congress were developed; new one-page information sheets are now delivered to every Member on each OTA study. All of the committees of Congress that have made requests for OTA assistance (or which may in the future) were asked to meet with the Director and his staff to discuss how OTA might assist these committees in the new Congress. The results of these efforts have been a new awareness of OTA's work among the Members of Congress, and new respect for the Office, which is providing timely, useful information for

congressional debate. As Chairman of the Board during 1978, I had the chance to speak with many of my congressional colleagues about OTA and I am pleased to observe the new enthusiasm generated by Director Peterson's outreach program.

Conclusion

Our Nation has learned in the last decade that technology development tends to be more rapid than public comprehension and congressional action; that the only developments that seem to move faster than technology are the latest crises resulting from the depletion of our resources; and that emerging and controversial technologies are reported on the front pages of our morning papers before any decision by elected representatives is made on the purpose, the direction, or the meaning of the new technologies for the next generation of Americans.

OTA is firmly on the road to becoming a unique, effective, respected, and critical support agency of Congress. While our feet are solidly on the ground, our direction is ever-forward—looking ahead so we may assure our children that the miraculous advances of technology will serve mankind well and wisely: and that future generations will not be the servants of an undisciplined and insensitive technology. It was my privilege to serve as Chairman of the Technology Assessment board in 1978, and I look forward to continuing my services as an OTA Board Member in 1979 because I firmly believe OTA's mission is essential, unique, and useful.

Edward M. Kennedy
Chairman
Technology Assessment Board