

Section I

**STATEMENTS BY THE
CHAIRMAN AND
VICE CHAIRMAN OF
THE BOARD AND THE
DIRECTOR OF OTA**

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Chairman's Statement—Congressman Morris K. Udall

During my tenure on the Board, I have enjoyed watching OTA develop into an effective support agency of Congress—one whose advice is sought and conclusions are heeded. As a result of OTA's success, Congress now has an all-important in-house capability to apply independent analysis to complex policy issues involving technology. OTA provides Congress with a unique and flexible mechanism to reach out and enlist the technical assistance and advice of experts in all sectors of our Nation. In performing this job, OTA receives the respect of the Members of Congress, and the increased interest of congressional committees in obtaining OTA's assistance in evaluating complicated technological issues.

OTA's bicameral and bipartisan Board of Directors strives to ensure that the type and quality of work that emerges from OTA fully merits the Congress' trust and the taxpayer's investment. I am pleased to report for the Board our satisfaction with the year now past and our confidence in OTA's continued service in the year ahead.

I have been privileged to have Senator Stevens of Alaska serve as Vice Chairman of the Board. His support and wisdom have assisted us in achieving many of the Board's goals throughout the year.

We were very fortunate to see Dr. Frederick C. Robbins elected Chairman of the Technology Assessment Advisory Council with Dr. Jerome Weisner as Vice Chairman. In having such distinguished experts to lead our Council, men devoted to the service of Congress and the country, TAAC is in capable hands. We deeply appreciate their continued commitment.

In June 1979, Dr. John H. Gibbons was appointed Director of OTA. I am grateful that we

were able to attract to this position a man of his demonstrated leadership, scientific contributions, and nationally recognized expertise on energy and environmental matters. He has brought to OTA a positive, stabilizing influence, and I look forward to having him at OTA's helm as it helps Congress sort out and face up to the technological issues before the country.

Under Dr. Gibbons' direction, OTA has accomplished much. It presented testimony before numerous committees throughout the year and published 26 reports and other work in 1979. We are confident that OTA will continue its fine record of producing high-quality studies in a manner which is responsive to the needs of its many clients in Congress. While the comprehensive OTA reports continue to provide the basis for OTA's advice and assistance to Congress, much value is also derived from such work products of OTA staff as special memoranda, briefings, and testimony. These daily, largely unseen, activities continue to help Congress make better decisions and anticipate issues sooner than might otherwise be possible.

I would also like to extend the gratitude of the Board to Daniel De Simone, Deputy Director, who so ably and willingly served as Acting Director during our selection process. We commend him for his professional achievements and energy in OTA's behalf.

I am proud to serve as Chairman of the OTA Board and look forward with much enthusiasm to the challenges facing us during the 1980's. In this complex world, we continue to need careful and objective analysis of the untold technological impacts facing us; and it appears that OTA is the institution to answer the call.

Vice Chairman's Statement—Senator Ted Stevens

As Vice Chairman, I had the honor to work with the skilled and knowledgeable members of the Technology Assessment Board in 1979. It is my belief that during the year the Board took important steps to improve its working relationship with OTA, and I look forward to the continuation of this valuable work in the second session of Congress.

1979 was a tumultuous year for OTA. Governor Russell W. Peterson, its second Director, resigned in March, and his successor, Dr. John H. Gibbons, had only been at work a short time when he had to deal with a budget crisis which, in combination with other internal problems, threatened to seriously impair OTA's ability to serve Congress. I believe that the worst of these problems is now behind us, and I am encouraged by the efforts being made to prevent similar problems from developing in the future. OTA's resources are too valuable and limited to waste in unproductive controversy.

Working closely with Dr. Gibbons, the Board revised its operations in 1979. The Director's ability to develop proposals for the Board, to respond to short-term congressional requests, and to convey completed assessments to requesters in a timely fashion was enhanced. In addition, new procedures were implemented to ensure

that the Board would obtain the information it needed to set policy and oversee operations.

As Chairman, Congressman Udall of Arizona gave essential guidance to the Board throughout the year. His firm leadership, combined with his concern for the views of other members of the Board, made the Board's fine work possible. It was a pleasure to serve with him.

Many interesting issues will be coming up before the Board in the second session. The terms of four members of the Technology Assessment Advisory Council will be up, and the Board will select new members and review the operations of the Council. More efforts will be made to streamline OTA operations. Most importantly, as the backlog of old assessments is reduced, there will be more opportunities to consider new proposals.

In conclusion, I would like to welcome Dr. John Gibbons. In the short time he has been at OTA, our new Director has demonstrated genuine desire and ability to work with Congress. He has made great strides in improving budgeting and planning procedures. I am certain that OTA will continue to benefit from Dr. Gibbons' leadership. We will all work to improve OTA's already impressive record.

Director's Statement—John H. Gibbons

OTA's role is to serve Congress by doing objective, nonpartisan, comprehensive analyses of national issues that involve technology. OTA does that job by linking congressional needs to the best expertise that exists anywhere in the country. Information drawn from those experts (typically in industry, academia, labor, and public interest groups) is further analyzed and integrated at OTA into forms appropriate to the needs of Congress. Thus, OTA's staff must be flexible, analytic, and attuned to working with a broad variety of people.

Since arriving in June to succeed Dr. Peterson, I constantly have been impressed with the

capabilities, productivity, and dedication of OTA's staff and with the respect and interest OTA commands among knowledgeable people across the country. It is indeed a privilege to have been chosen to lead this effort.

During 1979, OTA not only completed many formal assessments, but also spent considerable time and effort in translating, summarizing, and communicating the results to meet various specific needs of Congress. One new form of publication, the "technical memorandum," was introduced to enable us to extract elements of an ongoing assessment and deliver the information to Congress in time for use in legislative deci-

sions. OTA also was called on with increasing frequency to provide testimony, especially with respect to energy issues.

As we pause to consider the status and outlook for science and technology and attendant impacts on our society, it is clear that “interesting times” lie ahead of us. (An old Chinese curse goes something like this: “May you live in interesting times.”) The decade of the 1980’s will surely witness major changes in energy, telecommunications, genetic engineering, and the like. Exciting new options will become available to apply human ingenuity through technological and institutional innovations to improve the lot of humankind.

At the same time that major technological ad-

vances can help us achieve our aspirations they can also frustrate them. One person has aptly described nuclear energy as providing simultaneously the promises of heaven and the perils of hell. Advances in computers and telecommunications can open new vistas in improved productivity of people and resources, but they can also lead to new arms races, invasions of privacy, and the displacement of traditional jobs.

OTA’s role is to help Congress and the American people understand a little better and a little sooner the dynamics of technology in our society. We look forward to another interesting year, sobered by events of the recent past, but confident that ingenuity can productively influence our collective social choices.

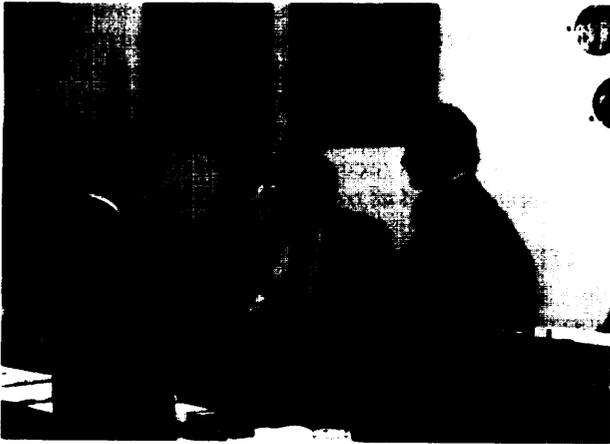


OTA Director's Swearing-In Ceremony

(Above) Dr. Gibbons being sworn in by OTA Board Chairman Rep. Morris K. Udall, as Mike McNulty, **Congressman Udall's staff counsel, holds the Holy Bible.** TAB Members, Representatives John W. Wydler (left) and John D. Dingell are in the foreground. (Top right) Chairman Udall and Dr. Gibbons. (Lower right) Dr. Gibbons chatting with Dr. Alexander Hollaender, Member of the National Academy of Sciences



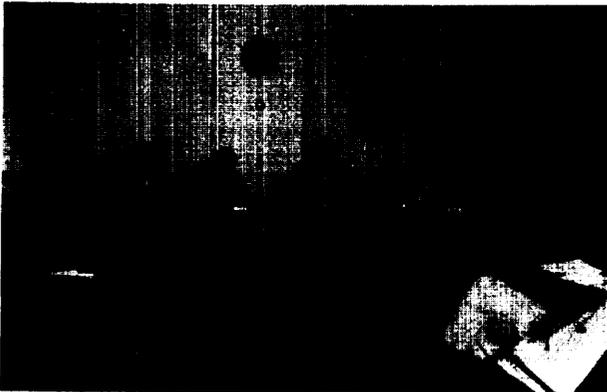
Congressional, Industry, and Academia Interactions



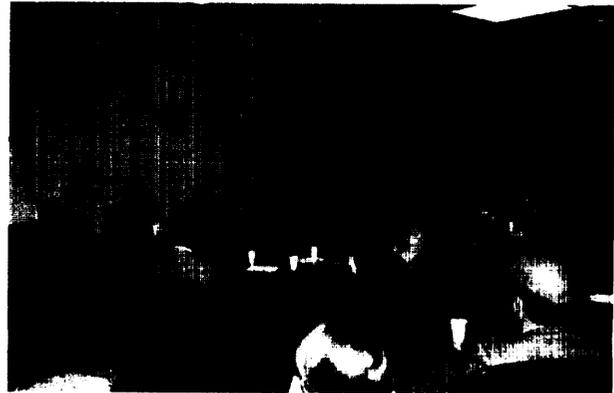
(Left to right) J. Fred Bucy (TAAC); Congressman Clarence E. Miller (TAB); former OTA Director Russell W. Peterson, Jerome Wiesner (TAAC); and Senator Edward M. Kennedy (TAB) in discussion following the joint meeting



Solar Power Satellite Panelist's Meeting



OTA Automobile R&D Seminar—Panel participants conducting a meeting on 1 of the 3 days that the seminar was held. (Left to right) Julius Harwood, Ford Motor Co.; Merton Flemings, M.I.T.; Bob Maxwell, OTA Transportation Program Manager; Robert Shuck, Republic Steel



(Left to right) Congressman Tom Harkin, Iowa; Senator Howard Cannon, Nevada; and Eric Willis, OTA Division Director for Science, Information, and Transportation participating in OTA's Automobile R&D Seminar