

### Section III

## Activities of the OTA Advisory Council

The OTA Advisory Council, under the direction of Chairman Harold Brown and Vice Chairman Edward Wenk, Jr., rendered valuable assistance to the OTA Congressional Board during the report year, particularly in the areas of developing assessment priorities and methodologies, and in providing opportunities for public participation. The diverse composition of the Council, with its wide range of professional leadership and experience, enabled it to establish balanced perspectives, encompassing insights and concerns from academic, industrial, and public interest viewpoints.

Activities of the Council included regularly scheduled meetings of the full membership, joint meetings with the Congressional Board, meetings and work session of Council subcommittees, organization and conduct of regional hearings and meetings with citizen groups, structuring of expert panels to address specific questions, and participation of individual Council members on advisory panels and committees formed by OTA for individual assessment projects. Full Council meetings, of either one- or two-day duration, were held in April, May, July, October, and December 1974, and in February 1975.

During the year under report, the Board asked the Advisory Council to develop recommendations for the formulation of procedures for establishing assessment priorities and for developing assessment methodologies. Considerable time and attention have been given to these tasks to help assure that OTA's resources are used in the most important and effective ways. As of the date of this report, OTA had received 47 Congressional request letters in which 105 separate issues were nominated as topics for assessment.

In March 1974, the Council appointed an ad hoc Subcommittee on Assessment Priorities, under the chairmanship of Dr. Jerome B. Wiesner. The group sought the advice of a wide range of spokesmen from various professions and various sections of the country during a series of five regional hearings, held in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, La Jolla, and Seattle, and a meeting in Washington involving representatives of various citizen-interest groups.

In a preliminary report, submitted to the full Council in February 1975, the subcommittee classified priority topics for assessment into four general categories: energy, materials, food, and biology and health. These categories coincide with four of the six priority areas designated by the OTA Board in February 1974.

The Council subcommittee considered possible procedures for establishing OTA priorities for allocating resources among competing Congressional assessment requests. It also noted the need to identify technological issues, warranting assessment, that have not yet surfaced in the current deliberations of the Congress. The subcommittee decided it could best serve OTA by examining means to call attention to emerging issues of long-range importance to society that merit immediate policy considerations.

One of the recommendations of the Council group was that a certain portion of the OTA budget be set aside for studies designed to provide early warning of developing issues. These might be identified by periodically conducting forums to seek the advice of specialists and generalists not directly involved in Congressional processes.

The Council subcommittee also assisted in the development of a list of selection criteria to be utilized by the OTA staff in preparing recommendations to the Congressional Board on assessment priorities.

A second major Advisory Council subcommittee was appointed in April 1974, in response to the Board's request for an overview and recommendations regarding methods and procedures for carrying out technology assessments. The ad hoc Subcommittee on Methodology was chaired by Mr. J. Fred Bucy. It concurred with the priorities subcommittee in recommending that OTA experiment with a variety of methods for making assessments.

Other important assignments undertaken during the year by the OTA Advisory Council include a study on the feasibility of a technology assessment dealing with the subject of national growth policy. The Council also assisted OTA in assembling an expert panel to render advice on both the need and the means for further evaluation of estimates, presented by the Department of Defense to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, dealing with the potential civil damage effects of a limited nuclear attack.

The task involving national growth policy resulted in a council recommendation, subsequently accepted by the OTA Board. This was to undertake a limited, first stage assessment effort which would concentrate on the effects *on* national growth patterns of decisions determining the locations of major new energy-generating facilities. The initial assessment, to be undertaken at a relatively low cost, will concentrate on the Nation's already heavily populated coastal regions and will utilize information being developed in OTA's ongoing assessment of Outer Continental Shelf energy technologies.

In the case of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's request for an assessment dealing with the potential effects of limited nuclear warfare upon U.S. society, OTA was able to call upon two individual members of the Advisory Council with expertise in the field, former Presidential Science Advisor Jerome Wiesner and former Air Force Secretary Harold Brown. The two Council members agreed to serve on an ad hoc panel on nuclear effects, appointed by the OTA Board and chaired by Dr. Wiesner.

This panel, comprised of ten persons with wide experience in the area of national strategic doctrine concepts, convened a one-day meeting on Saturday, February 1, 1975. The meeting produced a detailed critique of the Defense Department damage estimates presented earlier to the Senate committee, and a series of conclusions and recommendations as to the best approaches for pursuing the question further. (Members of the panel are listed at the end of this section.)

The panel concluded that the interests of the committee could best and most quickly be served not by an independent OTA assessment, but rather by a detailed request for further information to be submitted directly to the Department of Defense by the Foreign Relations Committee.

The Council also has provided assistance in the presentation of OTA's annual justification of budget estimates. During hearings held May 28, 1974, before the Senate Subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations, eight Council members appeared as witnesses in support of the fiscal year 1975 OTA budget request, and testimony was presented on behalf of a ninth member. Documentation in support of the fiscal year 1976 OTA budget request was strengthened through the efforts of a Council-appointed ad hoc budget review subcommittee headed by Dr. Edward Wenk, Jr.

In addition to these activities, the Council has been regularly briefed on the progress and status of all phases of OTA assessment projects, from inception to completion, and has provided helpful guidance and advice in the course of this review process. The cumulative efforts and contributions made by Council members during the report year reflect a major commitment of time, energy, and dedication to the furtherance of OTA's objectives.

## Nuclear Effects Panel

Dr. JEROME B. WIESNER, <i>Chairman</i> .	President, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
Dr. HAROLD BROWN . . . . .	President, California Institute of Technology.
Dr. SIDNEY D. DRELL . . . . .	Deputy Director, Stanford Linear Accelerator Center.
Dr. RICHARD L. GARWIN . . . . .	Thomas J. Watson Research Center, IBM Corporation.
Mr. SPURGEON M. KEENEY . . . . .	The MITRE Corporation.
Dr. GORDON MACDONALD . . . . .	Professor, Dartmouth College.
Admiral GERALD E. MILLER . . . . .	U.S. Navy (retired).
Dr. JAMES V. NEEL . . . . .	Department of Human Genetics, University of Michigan.
Dr. CHARLES T. OWNES . . . . .	Department of Physics, University of California at Berkeley.
Mr. ARCHIE WOOD . . . . .	Brookings Institution.

Dr. Henry Kelly, *Executive Secretary*