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JOHN H. GIBBONS  
DIRECTOR

Congress of the United States  
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-8025

April 25, 1988

MEMORANDUM

To: OTA staff  
From: Jack Gibbons   
Re: Premature release of SDI summary

Many of you were probably startled to read about the not-yet-released OTA study on SDI in Sunday's Washington Post. To help you in answering inquiries from curious onlookers, here are copies of our memos to the Board on the subject on last Friday and today.

Please refer any congressional calls to Jim Jensen on 4-9241 and any press calls to Jean McDonald on 8-6204.

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Congress of the United States

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-8025

April 22, 1988

MEMORANDUM

TO: Technology Assessment Board

FROM: John H. Gibbons *J. Gibbons*

SUBJ: OTA Report, SDI: Technology, Survivability, and Software

For your information, I am attaching galley proofs (just completed) of the unclassified version of the Summary of the Report, SDI: Technology, Survivability, and Software. I am happy to finally be able to make this available to TAB, since many Members' staffs without security clearances have until now been unable to examine any part of the assessment.

In over 9 months of negotiations with the Department of Defense, we have attempted to arrive at an officially unclassified version of the Report. Last December we began 4 months of work on the Report with the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, which obtained DoD authorization to manage the final review process. This intensive review led to a version of the entire report which OTA staff and SDIO staff agreed was unclassified and up-to-date.

As the enclosed letter from the SDIO indicates, chapters 1 to 9 of the Report have been officially declared free of classified material, except for a few bracketed passages, which we have removed. As of April 1, we understood that chapters 10-12, which address countermeasures and survivability, would be provided the following week with few, if any, additional recommended deletions. Instead, we have been informed that these chapters have been resubmitted for still further review.

We expect publication and release of the Report by late May, with or without the last three chapters. I will provide you with an advance copy before release. Please handle the enclosed Summary as embargoed until release.

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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-8025

April 25, 1988

MEMORANDUM

To: Technology Assessment Board  
From: John H. Gibbons *J. Gibbons*  
Re: April 24, 1988 Washington Post article on draft summary of OTA report on SDI: Survivability and Software and other press response

As most of you are aware by now, there was a story in the Washington Post on Sunday, April 24, 1988 on the findings in a draft summary of OTA's report SDI: Survivability and Software. You will note that we sent you an unclassified, galley-proof version of that summary last Friday.

Based on what we can piece together, the Post story may have been in the making for some time. We have been aware that copies of the summary have been in the hands of Greg Fossedal who wrote an article that appeared in the Washington Times last November 13, 1987, and in the hands of Neil Munro of Government Computer News, who wrote an article on February 19, 1988. The Post reporter, Jeffrey Smith, called the OTA project director twice on Friday, the first time in the afternoon with questions about the declassification process, apparently for a story in progress, and the second time in the evening with the news that he had the summary. Due to small language discrepancies, however, we are not completely sure which version of the summary Smith had.

Following conversations with staff for majority and minority of the House Appropriations Committee, and pending a conversation with the Senate Appropriations Committee, we currently plan to proceed with the original schedule and publish Chapters 1-9 together in the second half of May. If Chapters 10-12 are declassified by the Defense Department, we will include them in the published version.

For your information, we have also included copies of Monday followup stories in the Post, New York Times and Washington Times.

As you can well imagine, I am very disappointed that this leak occurred, because it cannot help but detract from the effectiveness of the delivery of the full Report. OTA has benefitted greatly from the fact that there have been very few such leaks in our history.