



December 1, 1978

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Volume 1, No. 5

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510

NAS Saccharin Study Confirms OTA Findings

The National Academy of Sciences' recent research report on saccharin confirms earlier OTA findings that the artificial sweetener causes cancer in rats and thus must be viewed as a potential carcinogen for humans. According to the November 24 issue of *Science*, congressional staffers have already dubbed the NAS saccharin report "OTA 2."

OTA undertook its study in March 1977 at the request of the Senate Committee on Human Resources. That request followed the public uproar caused by the announced intention of the Food and Drug Administration to ban saccharin on the basis of laboratory tests in Canada showing that it caused cancer in rats.

The Senate Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research used OTA's findings when it drafted a bill to postpone the FDA ban until further studies could be completed. The law delayed FDA action for 18 months and called for the NAS study of food safety policies in general and saccharin in particular. NAS will issue a second report in February on policy options for restricting the use of saccharin.

The OTA report, *Cancer Testing Technology and Saccharin*, is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office. The GPO stock number is 052-003-00471-2; the price is \$3.25.

Kennedy Sends President OTA's Solar Report

Calling OTA's recently completed solar study "one of the few comprehensive examinations of distributed solar energy systems," Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) sent to President Carter copies of both volumes of the onsite solar energy report on October 26.

In his covering letter, Senator Kennedy said "the OTA work clearly shows that a variety of small solar energy systems would be able to supply the United States with significant amounts of energy at competitive prices within the next two decades." Kennedy added: "I feel strongly that the potential for these small systems should not be overlooked in developing an overall policy for solar energy."

Volume II of the solar report features more than 500 tables for comparing the prices of various solar components and systems with conventional heating and cooling equipment. In releasing the report, OTA Director Russell Peterson said, "Anyone troubled about whether American industry has lost its imagination and vitality would have to be reassured by the vigorous activity we found in the technology of small solar equipment."

The report, *Application of Solar Technology to Today's Energy Needs: Volume II*, is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office. The GPO stock number is 052-003-00608-1; the price is \$8.75.

OTA Blows 'em Out at CFC

It was intended to be a week-long, low-key fund drive at OTA for the 1979 Combined Federal Campaign. It turned out to be a prize-and-pride-winning effort.

OTA will be receiving the CFC's prestigious Merit Award for that campaign effort which resulted in \$7,602.50—more than twice the OTA goal of \$3,450. Seventy-three percent of the staff participated, reflecting a most generous average of \$90.51 per gift. The average Federal worker gift this year, so far, is \$45.

In a letter to Governor Peterson, HEW Secretary and 1979 CFC Chairperson Joseph A. Califano, Jr., congratulated OTA on its campaign achievement and added special thanks to all at OTA for exceeding "a most challenging and meaningful goal."

At CFC Headquarters, OTA is being lauded for the most dramatic turnabout in the Federal campaign this year—an increase of 2,224.8 percent over our last year's donation.

"We attribute it," said Peter Hatt, CFC coordinator for 41 Federal agencies, "to strong, positive leadership on the part of Governor Peterson as well as a most enthusiastic staff at OTA."

That enthusiasm was especially apparent at last week's campaign victory celebration, attended by 1,400 Federal campaign key workers and leaders (including 11 from OTA).

During a slide presentation of each agency's achievements, the OTA slide received the loudest applause...an event which prompted host, radio personality Johnny Holliday, to award "special recognition for the loudest applause" to the OTA table.

"Next year," remarked Jake Steiger, OTA's Loaned Executive for the campaign, "we're going to show the OTA slide first. Your enthusiasm is an example to be followed."

Although the OTA campaign officially ended several weeks ago, anyone who might have missed the opportunity to participate can still do so (call Judith Angerman, 4-1806).

The theme for the 1979 CFC drive was "Caring. . . Sharing. . ."

"OTA truly did care, and share," said Hatt. "You can be assured that the community organizations, and the people they can help—thanks to your generosity—are most grateful."

OTA Releases Food Marketing Report

In a report released November 22, 1978, OTA said that new or emerging technologies for marketing food could possibly help stem rising food prices and offer new potential to get more nutritious food to the consumer faster. However, the report cautioned that these technologies need further study to determine their impacts on society.

The report identified seven emerging technologies, likely to be adopted in the near future, which need further study.

The report, *Emerging Food Marketing Technologies*, is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office. The GPO stock number is 052-003-00612-0; the price is \$2.75.

ASSESSMENTS IN PROGRESS BY DIVISION AND GROUP

Energy, Materials, & World Security Division

Energy Group

Coal Utilization
Energy from Biological Processes
Future Energy Alternatives
Residential/Commercial Energy Conservation
Solar Power Satellite Systems

Materials Group

Conservation Through Reduced Wastage
Existing Federal Coal Development Rights
Future Availability of Imported Materials
Oil Shale Technology

Military Group

Effects of Nuclear War

Technology & World Trade Group

Impact of Technology on U.S. Industry Competitiveness
Impacts of Global Trends in Energy Supply, Demand & Technology
Implications of International Technology Transfer

Health & Life Sciences Division

Food Group

Alternative Pest Management Strategies
Environmental Contaminants in Food
Open-Dating Techniques for Processed Foods
Use of Drugs and Chemicals as Feed Additives

Genetics & Population Group

Impacts of Applied Genetics

Health Group

Cost-Effectiveness of Medical Technologies

Science, Information, & Transportation Division

Oceans Group

Disposal of Nuclear Wastes
Renewable Ocean Energies
Siting of Coastal Energy Facilities

Research & Development Group

Regulations & Technological Innovation
Technology for Local Development

Telecommunications & Information Systems

Impacts of Telecommunications Technology
Societal Effects of National Information Systems

Transportation Group

Future Use & Characteristics of the Automobile Transportation System
Impacts of Advanced Air Transport Technology
Railroad Safety Follow-on

Barney Appointed OTA Assistant Director

Dr. Gerald O. Barney has been named Assistant Director for Science, Information, and Transportation. He will head OTA programs in information technology, oceans, transportation, and R&D policies and priorities. Dr. Barney will begin work at OTA January 1, 1979.

Holding a Ph.D. in physics, Dr. Barney is currently completing the "Global 2000 Study," which was chartered by President Carter to examine world trends in population, resources, and the environment. In announcing Dr. Barney's appointment, OTA Director Russell W. Peterson said his work on the study "will be of enormous benefit...to the Office of Technology Assessment in its work for the Congress."

Doyle Heads TIS

Governor Peterson also announced that Stephen Doyle has been selected as group manager for telecommunications and information system technologies. Doyle has extensive telecommunications experience in the State Department, the Federal Communications Commission, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Ruanne Pengov, who had been acting group manager, will continue as project leader for the national information systems study.

McBee to Join GE

Buyrn Named Head of Materials

Dr. Audrey Buyrn, a physicist with OTA's energy group and former congressional fellow, has been promoted to head OTA's Materials Group. In the Energy Group, Buyrn has worked on the nuclear proliferation assessment and headed OTA's study of biomass.

Buyrn succeeds Albert E. Paladino, who leaves OTA in December to join General Telephone and Electronics in Massachusetts.

Carolee McBee has announced she will resign her position as manager of OTA's National Research and Development Policies and Priorities Assessment Group as of December to accept employment with General Electric in Schenectady, N.Y. Initially, she will be doing program planning and product development of fossil fuels. No replacement has been named as yet.

Daniel Bell: Seminar Speaker

Professor Daniel Bell, widely known author, professor of sociology at Harvard, and much involved in the field of telecommunications, will be guest speaker at OTA's December 7 Dinner Seminar. Social consequences of new communications technology will be the subject of Professor Bell's talk.

PROFILES—who we are

OTA is filled with people who possess not only keen but often multifaceted talents. To help us to know one another better, the newsletter will run brief sketches of people.

BRAD HOLLOWON (Energy)

Roots: Born in Boston. Raised in Schenectady, N.Y.

Background: B.A. in Economics, Harvard; M.S.E., Dartmouth. Spent 2 years in Peace Corps in Venezuela. Worked for a planning commission in western Pennsylvania. Felt isolated so moved to Illinois State Transportation.

How Came to OTA: Rodger Digillo (former Transpo Group Manager) hired him for coal slurry pipeline study.

Interests: "Bicycling, sailing (not simultaneously). Have had few opportunities to sail recently because of young family and no boat."

Family: One wife and two sons, Andrew 3 and Eric 1.

Life in Washington: "I will like living in Washington. But so far there's little opportunity, due to young children and work, to enjoy the city."

Best Recent Experience: "When youngest child slept through entire night."

Worst Recent Experience: "I can't think of a recent bad experience (maybe I'm due for one)."

POLLY EHRENHAFT (Health)

Background: MA in Public Health, University of North Carolina; BA Tufts University.

Recent Accomplishment: Project leader for 1977 report of medical information systems. Currently project leader for health data systems study.

Previously: Worked for the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences on study of reimbursements under Medicare/Medicaid.

How Came to OTA: "Just happened. I sent over a resume and they hired me. My best friend had left the Institute of Medicine and I decided it was time for me to leave too."

Family: Unmarried. Brother deals craps in Las Vegas.

Interests: Health care clinics—"what else?"

Hobbies: "None, except volleyball, movies, and dull stuff like that. The interesting things you can't print."

Favorite Book: *To the Precipice* by Judith Rossner.

Roots: "I's just a plain old country girl from the foothills of the Catskill Mountains in New York."

On Life in Washington: "I really like Washington. Why do I like Washington? I don't know; I just do. I guess because of the museums and theatre and the fact that its a very pretty city."

MARVIN OTT (E, M & WS)

Recent Accomplishments: Edited priority one-pagers. Currently serving as policy analyst for Energy, Materials, and World Security Division.

Education: BA (summa cum laude) from University of Redlands (Los Angeles); Ph.D. in International Relations, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Phi Beta Kappa, Danforth, Woodrow Wilson Scholar; awarded Fulbright fellowship for dissertation, spent year studying in Hong Kong.

Professional Background: Taught political science and international relations at Mount Holyoke College for 8 years.

Interests: Asian art and politics; world population, energy, food and environmental problems.

Hobbies: Antiques, tennis, wildlife—"Actually, I don't have much time for those; I'm a true Washington workaholic."

Roots: Los Angeles, Calif.

On Life in Washington: "I like Washington. It's a fascinating political town, whether sinful or not. It is also becoming a major intellectual center."

Recent Book Read: Carl Sagan's *The Dragons of Eden*—"Actually, I spend what little free time I have reading political science journals and the like."

House Science Committee Issues Report on OTA

"The Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) is and has been doing a creditable job for the Congress in its first four years of full operation; its methods of operation are both necessary and unique; and it has been wise to concentrate its major efforts in responding to congressional committee requests whether the requests are short or long range."

So said a report by the House Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology in its review of OTA.

At the same time the report contained these cautions, among others: It said the OTA Congressional Board needs to:

- Establish "realistic criteria" to guide it in determining "which requests involve genuine technology assessments and which do not;"

- Review its procedures and make sure it does not intrude into operational affairs; and
- Consider establishing a subunit to handle most of its routine business.

The committee report cautioned against "an excessive buildup of in-house staff;" rather, it said, OTA "must retain its current emphasis on outside advisory and contract operations." The Advisory Council should be used "purely in an advisory capacity;" the report said, while the office needs to "maintain consistent close ties with all congressional committees" and other congressional agencies. The Director needs dependable quality control systems for assessments and in-house personnel, it said, and called on OTA to identify its own "emerging issues" and emphasize the assessment of long-range issues.

In his letter transmitting the report to the Committee on Science and Technology, Subcommittee

Chairman Ray Thornton gave this capsule description of the subcommittee's findings:

I think the Subcommittee's inquiry points to these basic conclusions: (1) OTA is being used by the various committees of the House and Senate and there appears to be a growing reliance upon it by the Congress; (2) the assessments which have been performed thus far by OTA have proved useful to the Congress in a large majority of cases; (3) OTA should continue to be supported by Congress as a unique and important source of evaluated information; and (4) while it seems clear that the 1972 Organic Act would profit from certain changes, OTA should continue its operations on the current legislative basis for at least two more years, at which time amendments to the statute might well be considered.

Mr. Thornton added that his subcommittee had undertaken a thorough survey of OTA's major assessment users. "It doesn't leave much doubt that the Office is a valuable asset to Congress," he stated.

We solicit views and opinions of OTA people for this "forum."

Alternative Global Futures: A Scenario

by Lucia Turnbull

Intelligence sources on the planet Earth discovered a recent study entitled "Alternative Global Futures: 2000 and Beyond," published by a leading Earth power. Science advisors here have not fully deciphered the report's complex coding. However, they believe the report cites overpopulation, overconsumption, and total resource depletion as major findings for the years 2000 and beyond. The findings do not shed any new light on the planet Earth's problems. The report's significance lies in its statements about the planet's culture and in its projections of alternatives for the future.

The report states that two major cultures comprise Earth's civilization: the Have's and the Have Nots. The early warning component of the study indicates that those two cultures may have a catastrophic clash over Earth resources within the first two decades of their so-called 21st century. As indicated by the report, warfare would resolve the overpopulation problem, but the concurrent trade-off would be resource contamination.

The Global Futures study offers several policy and future scenario alternatives to the planet's problems. These are:

- development and use of scientific control devices including:
 - organic human consolidation mechanism designed to reduce humans to single-cell high-powered units;
 - population farming, a branch of agricultural sciences designed to clone and control body-mind combinations in the population;
 - elimination of animal life unnecessary to planet operation;
 - control and development of plant and water life through incubator tracts located around the planet;
- development and conversion of human existence through extra-sensory perception;
- scientific development of a First Cause as the psychological mechanism necessary to reverse planetary problems;
- extraplanetary expansion and settlement.

While the first three alternatives appear significant to Earth policy, the fourth is causing extreme concern among scientific advisors here. High level conferences are planned for the leaders of this universe and members of other Intercelestial zones. Those attending comprise the majority of cosigners to the Treaty of Intercelestial Ambient Mutation (IAM) signed after the Great War of the 89th century.

Scientists here are not clear on how the alternatives presented by the study relate to current issues being dealt with by leading Earth powers. The conferences will concentrate on further linking the report's alternatives to issues reported by intelligence sources, to be under study by Earth powers. If successful, Celestial Interpretive beams will be sent to Earth powers.

OTA Sports Wrap-Up

OTA athletic supporters are invited to a party December 14 to honor the achievements of our dauntless football and softball teams. The party will be held at 5:30 p.m. in conference rooms C and D. Tickets are 50¢ (two for \$1) and proceeds will go to Augustinian College in appreciation for use of their field (\$75 was raised for the college last year).

OTA's Juggernauts finished the football season with a 3 win - 2 loss - 1 tie record. Victories came against teams from the House Budget Committee, Senate Documents, and Rep. James Jeffords. Last year's football record was a lowly 0 wins - 6 defeats.

In softball, OTA wound up a most successful season with 7 wins and only 3 losses in division play, good for a second place finish. Overall, the softball team won 14 and lost 7, up from a 9-7 record in 1977.

Drawings will be held at the party. The first place winner will serve as coach of OTA's softball team next year. Second place prize will be a bottle of spirits and third place a bottle of lesser spirits. For further information and tickets, call Carol Drohan (5-8276).

Capitol Pun-ishment!

(In response to our challenge last month, we received the following:)

Junior Bridge is not necessarily a dental appliance for children. . .nor an erector set.

Mary Joy is not necessarily redundant (even at Christmas).

Skip doesn't.

Dracula was a stakeholder. . .and so was Joan of Arc.

Staff Seminar

Governor Peterson has announced the establishment of an OTA Staff Seminar Series. The first in the series, entitled "Coal: Ace in the Hole or Joker in the Deck?," will be held Tuesday, December 12 at 4:30 p.m. in the Conference Center. These seminars are intended to provide a regular opportunity for OTA staff and invited committee staff to get together and discuss current topics of mutual interest. Each seminar will center on the subject of a recently or nearly completed assessment. The focus will be major issues, policy implications, and significance for Congress of the topic at hand. The only requirement for participation is an inquiring mind. The atmosphere will be informal and refreshments will be available.

Appointed to take charge of the seminar program are: **Marvin Ott**, Chairman; **Barry Barrington**; and **Mick Riddiough**.

Transitions

Yvonne Noel has joined OTA as a secretary in the Food group. . . **Helena Hassell**, formerly a "temp" at OTA, is now on board in the Technology and Foreign Affairs Group. . . **Andy Kapsak** is now a full-timer at OTA on the Admin staff. . . **Fred Wood**, formerly with G W University is working in OTA's materials group. . . **Irene Szopo** and **James Beall**, two OTA Fellows, will start December 1 in the Technology and World Trade Group. . . **Dottie Richroath** has been promoted to Administrative Assistant in Tech and World Trade Group. . . **Desiree Steerup**, erstwhile of Public Affairs, reports from Chicago that she'll enroll at Western Illinois University next month. (She also reminds us that we left notice of her departure out of this Newsletter, to which she was a major contributor while at OTA. We're sorry for the goof, Diz.) . . **Jim Tolson**, who had planned to join his brother in business in New Hampshire, will remain at OTA. . . **Irene Zarechnak** is leaving OTA's R&D group to join the staff of the Stanwick Corp, in Rosslyn, VA.