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Newsletter

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Director Gibbons:

First Words to OTA Staff

On June 7, just after taking office full-time, Dr. John H. Gibbons, OTA's new Director, called the entire OTA staff together to speak informally about his background and views of the Office and its mission. Here are excerpts from those remarks:

"Some years back I spent some time in Washington, in a fast-changing scene. The commonality then was to call in and ask to speak to the boss but first to ask for his name. . . . My name is Jack Gibbons. . . . I am deeply honored to be here. . . .

"I was very much honored to be asked to take this job. I was honored not so much by recognition of my past work, which I hope at least did not interfere with the appointment, but because I personally hold in such high regard the potential of this Office to productively steer major Federal policy. . . . While I didn't actively seek this job, I accept it with excitement and enthusiasm. . . .

"I was personally aware of the quality of the OTA staff, which I am now pleased to be working for. . . .

"One of our essential needs is to keep our eye on the future. That anticipatory mode is one of our most fundamental charges. . . . We must stay a jump ahead of the issues that are before the Congress so we can be very responsive to the needs of Congress. . . .

"Simultaneously, with the eye to the future, we have to have a strong sense of responsiveness matched to the time scale that the Congress must perceive be involved in. That means paying attention to the information gathered by past studies and our unique capability to funnel information from a variety of sources from around the country, with an even and careful weighing, and then to deliver the goods promptly. The challenge is not so much to develop new data, but to turn existing data into knowledge, and hopefully that knowledge into some wisdom. . . .

"Finally, we have to lean on each other. . . . We advance or we fail together. Therefore, the mobility of ideas and the free exchange of constructive criticism has to be one of the most important parts of our lifestyles. . . . Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. I think we have a consensus on a set of principles here that are very real and not a matter of debate. Hopefully, we will have a good deal of debate about opinions, and by doing that we will have a collective strength that none of us can match individually. . . .

"We should send nothing but the very best over to the Hill—a hallmark for OTA. . . . We have to improve on our constituency role. While maintaining our essential independence in every way, we must remember that we work for the Congress and that our work has its best meaning when it helps with their work."

Fred Wood To Head National Information Systems Study

Fred Wood has been appointed project leader for the study of the Societal Impacts of National Information Systems. Wood succeeds Ruann Pengov, who is leaving OTA to move to San Francisco.

Holder of an MBA from Harvard and a Ph.D. in management science from George Washington University, Wood has worked with both the telecommunications and materials groups at OTA. He has been the task leader for electronic message systems in the telecommunications group and a policy analyst for the materials conservation study.

Prior to joining OTA in November 1978, Wood was a project director and research scientist in technology assessment at George Washington University. There he led a study of congressional videoconferencing via satellite and participated in studies of the U.S. Postal Service and of materials information systems for OTA.

Panshin To Head Subcommittee Staff

Daniel Panshin will leave OTA effective June 15 to become staff director for the Subcommittee on Maritime Education and Training of the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.

Panshin currently is a congressional fellow at OTA on leave from Oregon State University. A Ph.D. oceanographer, Panshin has been helping plan for a study of ocean research and platform technology.

In his new position, Panshin will work for Rep. Les AuCoin (D-Ore.), chairman of the House subcommittee.

AT&T Withdraws Subpoena Against OTA

On May 18, Daniel De Simone, OTA Acting Director, informed the Technology Assessment Board that AT&T had agreed to withdraw its subpoena against OTA.

The telephone company subpoena had been served on OTA March 14 to require OTA to produce documents concerning the U.S. Government's suit against AT&T, Bell Laboratories, and Western Electric Company.

Noting that the serving of the subpoena "raised unique policy questions for OTA and its relationships with the Congress," Mr. De Simone discussed the subpoena with AT&T representatives and secured its withdrawal.

Robbins To Retire as Dean of Medical School

Dr. Frederick C. Robbins, chairman of OTA's Advisory Council, has announced his intention to retire as dean of the Medical School at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. The exact date of his stepping down depends on when a successor is chosen, but is set for no later than July 1, 1980.

Robbins became chairman of TAAC in March 1979 after serving as vice chairman for a year. He also chairs OTA's Health Advisory Committee, and headed the advisory panel for the study of saccharin and cancer testing technology. Robbins was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1954 for his contributions to physiology.

Coal, Nuclear Effects, Federal Lands

Three New Reports Published in May

OTA has issued three new reports dealing with controversial issues—the direct use of coal, the effects of nuclear war, and the management of minerals on Federal lands—now before the Congress.

The report on coal assessed the prospects and problems of its direct use—that is, by burning coal rather than converting it to a liquid or gas. The report examined the prospects of vastly increasing coal use—by perhaps as much as three times its current use by 2000—and the problems that would involve.

OTA concluded that coal production could be tripled to meet national energy goals without relaxing environmental, health, and safety standards designed to protect against its negative impacts. However, while increased coal use will probably not have the same serious environmental and social impacts it had in the past, the effects of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, acid rain, and exposure to low levels of coal-related pollutants remain uncertain.

The report, "The Direct Use of Coal: Prospects and Problems of Production and Combustion," is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office. The GPO stock number is 052-003-00664-2; the price is \$7.00.

OTA's report on the effects of nuclear war analyzed the levels of death and economic damage that might occur following the range of full-scale to more limited nuclear exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union. It concluded that as many as 165 million Americans might die in an all-out war.

"A militarily plausible nuclear attack, even 'limited,' could be expected to kill people and to inflict economic damage on a scale unprecedented in American experience," the report stated. "A large-scale nuclear exchange would be a calamity unprecedented in human history."

Two major findings of the report are that conditions would continue to get worse following a nuclear war for a long time before they started to get better, and that the effects of a nuclear war that cannot be calculated in advance are at least as important as those which analysts attempt to quantify.

Copies of the OTA report, "The Effects of Nuclear War," are available from the U.S. Government Printing Office. The GPO stock number is 052-003-00668-5; the price is \$4.75.

The third OTA report released in May examines land management laws and practices that affect access to fuel and nonfuel minerals on federally owned lands, particularly in the West. The report complements an earlier OTA study of access to minerals across Federal lands, with emphasis on the Alaska lands issue.

On the one hand, fears that mining activities cause irreparable environmental and ecological damage have led to large tracts of land being withdrawn from exploration and production. On the other hand, some feel that such restrictions may seriously harm the U.S. mining industry and cause shortages within the next several decades.

The report, "Management of Fuel and Nonfuel Minerals in Federal Land," is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office. The GPO stock number is 052-003-00667-7; the price is \$6.25.

Board, Advisory Council To Meet

The June 20 meeting of OTA's Congressional Board is set for Room EF-100 of the Capitol at 3:30 p.m.

At the meeting, Dr. Gibbons will be officially sworn in as OTA Director and a reception in his honor will follow in the Capitol.

OTA's Advisory Council has scheduled its next meeting for Thursday, July 26, in the Conference Room at 600 Pennsylvania Ave. S.E.

The OTA newsletter is published monthly to help keep staff members and congressional personnel informed about matters of interest. It is available to others interested in the Office by writing to:

Public Affairs Office
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Congress of the United States
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OTA Establishes Murtagh Memorial Fellowship

As a living memorial to Mary Murtagh, OTA's late Liaison Officer, who died unexpectedly on May 14 following a stroke, Daniel De Simone, the Acting Director, announced the establishment of the Mary Murtagh Memorial Fellowship.

Mr. De Simone said that the fellowship "will be awarded each year to an outstanding woman who exhibits the qualities of mind and character that were so beautifully epitomized by Mary."

Murtagh had been OTA's Liaison Officer since early 1978. Prior to that, she was Senator Edward M. Kennedy's staff person responsible for liaison with OTA. She had been a staff assistant to Sen. Kennedy since 1970.

In a memorial service for Mary at St. Joseph's Church in Washington on May 23, Sen. Kennedy said, "to have known Mary is to vividly remember her," and cited several anecdotes of her work with him.

"There were so many other things," Kennedy added: "The frantic scrambles to get the fact books up to date for trips to Massachusetts; the incredible loyalty; the unminced words; the subtle humor; the self-effacing comments; the infectious Irish laugh that could crack up the office and ease any tension; the subscription she canceled to the Washington Post because of the efforts to break the strike; the perseverance and determination that put her through Georgetown Law School at night, while doing the work of two by day; the free spirit symbolized by the environmental poster on her wall that read 'Close to the Wild Heart of Life.'"

Rep. Morris K. Udall, who succeeded Sen. Kennedy as chairman of OTA's Congressional Board, observed: "For measuring a life by compassion, by caring, by loyalties that life can build, then Mary was wealthy beyond what dollars or material possessions can match. This great lady had an empathy and sensitivity that was uncommon. I think she could spot a phony at 100 yards or sense a lonely soul in need of help in merely a glance."

"And in this city where there is so much posturing and dissembling, Mary Murtagh was plain and genuine and 100-proof honesty and humanity. She reminded me of a slogan once seen at the marches in those days in the '60's where she was participating which said simply, 'No more B.S.'"

Murtagh's family has requested that expressions of sympathy be in the form of contributions to the Community for Creative Non-Violence at 1329 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

A graduate of the University of Detroit, Murtagh came to Washington following service with the Social Security Administration in Detroit, New York, and Baltimore.

She was 38 years of age.

[INSIDE OTA—This part of the newsletter is intended for internal distribution.
The front part is designed to be of more general interest.]

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.

H. DAVID BANTA (Health)

Roots: Born Electra, Tex.

Education: B.A. and M.D., Duke Univ.; Master of Public Health and Masters of Science in health services administration, Harvard Univ.; resident in internal medicine, Univ. of Washington.

Experience: Taught community medicine and public health at Mt. Sinai for five years. Worked as a Robert Wood Johnson fellow for Sen. Jacob Javits and Rep. Paul Rogers in 1974-75.

Work at OTA: Came to OTA in 1975 as project leader on the efficacy and safety of medical technologies study. Left in December 1977 for the National Center for Health Services Research. Returned to OTA in September 1978 as group manager for health.

On Life in Washington: "I like Washington, although I really love New York. I'd return to New York, but my wife hates it, so Washington is a good compromise. The most important thing in life is the ballet—it's good here, but it's not New York ballet."

Interests: A voracious reader, devouring 6 or 7 books a week on any subject from medicine to history to science fiction to mysteries.

Self-Characterization: "People around here view me as being very serious, but I'm really just a kid who somehow grew up. My wife describes me as being 41 going on 16. And I'd have to agree."

BOB NIBLOCK (Oceans)

Roots: "My father claimed I was born in a rowboat during the 1936 floods. My mother said I was born in the East Liverpool, Ohio, hospital. I tend to believe her."

Education: Baldwin-Wallace College, B.A., Economics. Masters in communication from a joint program at Boston University and Harvard.

Experience: As a graduate student, worked as reporter for the Boston Globe. After Navy stints, while a management trainee for Ohio Bell, he "put all my belongings in the car and drove to D.C." Got job at the Mariner's Museum in Newport News, Va., where "two great things happened. I met my wife and developed an interest in oceanography." Started own newsletter, "Oceanology."

How Came to OTA: Was executive director of the Marine Technology Society when Hill person called to tell him about a job at OTA. His response: "What's an OTA?" Then, "Sounds like they have a long way to go."

Life in Washington: "My answer would not do it justice. It is hard to nail it down to one thing, but then, I'm an incurable romantic."

Best Recent Experience: "Quit smoking!"

Latest Accomplishment: Co-inventor of "Ruby Racer." "Actually Skip Johns invented it and I'm the marketer."

Volunteered Quote: "I refuse to be interviewed."

Worst Recent Experience: Honda Car in repair shop for last 4½ months.

DORIS SMITH (SITD)

Roots: Born and raised in Jacksonville, Fla. Came to Washington to go to business school.

Family: Husband, Smitty, no children. ("He's a good cook...and liberated.")

How Came to OTA: With Dr. Willis, to whom she is assistant. Has worked with him since 1970, for him since 1975 when Willis left the Advanced Research Projects Agency (DOD) to work in Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA).

Interests: Plays—attends many. Favorite playwright: Neil Simon. ("He's just fantastic! I try to see all of his plays but missed Chapter Two when it was at the Warner.")

Recent Book Read: The Thornbirds. ("Couldn't put it down...")

What Likes about Washington: "I like the atmosphere. There are so many cultural things—you can participate in just about anything your mood calls for at the moment. Washington is close enough to NYC for frequent shopping trips and seeing broadway shows which I certainly take advantage of as often as possible."

First Impression of OTA: "I liked it because it was a small agency, similar to ARPA. Leaving ARPA for DOE, I couldn't believe the cast of thousands. Here you don't get lost in the crowd."

Pet Peeve: Rudeness.

Characterization: Is gracious, pleasant, tasteful; brings style to OTA.

Softball

OTA Skein Halted at Six

by Jeffrey P. Cohn

A two-out base hit to deep right-center field drove in a run in the bottom of the 10th inning to give Sen. Stevens' office a 4-3 come-from-behind victory in a hard-fought and well-played game June 6. The loss snapped OTA's winning streak at six games, the longest in the team's 4-year history.

OTA jumped out to a 3-1 lead after three innings. Fine defensive play by Stevens' team prevented more runs from scoring as OTA batsmen stung several balls only to have them hauled down in the far reaches of the Ellipse outfield. Stevens' tied the score at 3-3 with two runs in the fifth inning. OTA threatened in the eighth as Charlie Holland and Ted Wagner hit successive singles, but Holland was thrown out at third to end the inning. A re-match has been scheduled for Sunday, June 24, at 4 p.m. at the Ellipse.

In previous games, OTA put together the six-game skein with wins over teams from the Small Business Administration, HEW's planning and evaluation office, the offices of Sens. Gravel and Matsunaga and Rep. Ron Dellums, and the U.S. Railroad Association. Earlier, OTA's only loss was in a disputed game with the White House, 8-5.

In those six victories, OTA amassed a total of 77 runs against only 38 for the opponents. OTA scored 17 runs against Dellums, 16 against USRA, and 15 against the Small Business Administration. By contrast, Dellums' team was held to only one run.

One reason for this record has been outstanding defensive play. Led by Jim Tolson, Ted Wagner, Robie Burke, John Bell, and David Carr, among others, as well as the pitching of Joanne Heming, Ann Woodridge, and Kathy Beil, OTA makes opponents earn every run they get. To date, OTA has executed three double plays and thrown out four runners attempting to take an extra base on balls hit to the outfield.

Credit must also be given to team coach Chuck Wixom, who has scheduled a record 16 games and managed to keep as many as 23 players reasonably happy by playing everyone in most games (albeit by a substitution strategy some say resembles Brownian motion). If he is able to maintain this pace, Wixom may keep his demanding owners satisfied.

The victories have not come cheaply, however, as several players have suffered injuries. John Bell aggravated an old knee injury running out a base hit, while both Butch Rudd and Jeff Cohn came out of games claiming pulled leg muscles.

More seriously, Jim Leach and Joel Miller have been sidelined with injuries suffered off the field. On the field, Joanne Heming was hurt hurling at HEW. Heming was hit on the ankle by a vicious line drive, fell to the ground in excruciating pain, and had to be carried off the field. Her injury was not serious, however, and she returned to action two weeks later. Marya Breznay stopped a line shot with her leg in the same game.

Following the Stevens' game, OTA's record stood at 6-2 and 2-1 in Senate League play. To make the playoffs, OTA must play all seven opponents in the Senate League's western division—and top their records—and at least any five other teams.

Finally, team pictures are now available. Contact Vicki Sibley, chief OTA photographer.

Identify the Quote

The following is a quote from a book currently being read by an OTA staff person. If you can identify the book or the author, the Board of Editors will suitably reward you.

Freedom is meaningful only when we understand the forces that affect our lives and comprehend the outcome of the various choices we make. The present economic and scientific revolutions are rapidly destroying the relevance of old theories, but we are not informing people of the meaning or effects of these changes. As a result, we are forcing many people to abdicate their decisionmaking function: they find it necessary to accept the ideas of those who claim that they understand the problems:

If you have a candidate quotation for inclusion in this feature, please let us know. The Bd. of Eds. will suitably reward those who submit items that reach print in these pages.

(Rules: For contestants—you are on your honor not to ask a library to do your searching for you. For submitters—the work should be readily available, either in bookstores or generally available in libraries.)

Press Puts OTA on Page One

With news that 165 million Americans might die in an all-out nuclear war with the Soviet Union and that Detroit would be obliterated, OTA's report on the effects of nuclear war received front-page coverage from the Washington Post, Detroit Free Press, and Detroit News, among others. It was also featured in Time magazine. Roscoe Drummond cited OTA in a column on SALT in the Christian Science Monitor on May 23.

Two members of the project's advisory panel—John Steinbrenner and Jeremy Stone—appeared on NBC-TV's "Today Show" on May 16 to discuss the OTA report and its implications. The report was also covered by George Herman on CBS radio network news at 6 pm on May 1.

OTA's report on the direct use of coal also received major press attention in the Washington Post, Christian Science Monitor, and the National Journal. The Associated Press, United Press International, and Newhouse News Service wires ran copy on OTA's analysis of the consequence of expanding the use of coal.

Several stories have appeared on the appointment of OTA's Director, Dr. John H. Gibbons. Notable among these were extensive articles in both Nature and the Economist.

Where Are They Now????

Jaime George—former admin employee is now a law clerk with the law firm of Howrey & Simon in Washington, D.C., which specializes in antitrust law... Cindy Stern—once an editor in the publishing office now writes and edits a newsletter for Loeb, Rhoades, & Hornblower on Wall Street... Dick Kirschten—first public affairs officer at OTA now writes on the environment for the National Journal... Chuck Barry—former consultant for the food group and public affairs office is now head of public relations for the Cleveland Illuminating Company in Cleveland, Ohio. Know any others? Let us know.

Ahoy, Sailors

Who sails? Know of any sailing group on the hill or in Congress? Contact Bill or Gretchen at 4-4142.

Transitions

Bernadette Balakit of the Materials Group and Yvonne Noel of the Food and Renewable Resources Group have left OTA to further their education... Rose Sutton of Energy has left to pursue a career in real estate... Jenifer Robison is now with the Energy Group working as an analyst... Mike McNulty is temporarily filling the position of Liaison Officer... Bill Scanlon, a Congressional Fellow in Genetics, has left OTA to return to his home and family in Michigan, and is soon to become a new father... Congressman Dingle's new liaison to OTA is Rick Fortuna... Betsy Amin-Arsala is now in the Genetics and World Population Group... Jerry Hardin is back for the summer working in Admin... Pat Canovan, who started at OTA in the Public Affairs Office as a temporary, is now working full time with Materials.

GOING PLACES

OTA has lost the services of Ruann Pengov, who resigned effective June 9. Pengov is moving from Washington to San Francisco to join her husband-to-be.

Since August 1978, Pengov had been project leader for the study of the Societal Effects of National Infor-

mation Systems in the telecommunications group. She came to OTA as a congressional fellow in 1977-78, working with the health group.

Chris Wright, effective July 1, will become a staff member for science policy and institutional development at the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Currently a senior associate at OTA, Wright joined the Office in 1976. In his 3 years at OTA, he has worked on studies of R&D policies and priorities and their implications. Most recently, Wright undertook a preliminary analysis of the effects of non-ionizing radiation.

Before coming to OTA, Wright was director of the Columbia University Institute for the Study of Science in Human Affairs from 1966 to 1976. Previously, he had been executive director of the Council for Atomic Age Studies. He also worked for the Rockefeller Foundation.

LINTON RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP

Dennis Linton of the Publishing Office has been awarded a \$2,000 scholarship by the Washington Litho Club. Linton, a 1978 graduate of Crossland Senior High School, will be leaving OTA in August to pursue his studies at the West Virginia Institute

of Technology. He plans to major in printing management.

The Washington Litho Club annually awards four such scholarships to outstanding local students who desire a career in the field of publishing. John Holmes of the OTA Publishing Office sponsored Linton's application and Joanne Heming typed it. Kathie Boss supplied the stamp. John Bergling licked the envelope.

Another scholarship was awarded to John Augustine, an eagle scout from John Holmes' troop 1623, in Fairfax, Va. John is presently a sophomore at W. Va. Tech and he promised to show Dennis the ropes.

Personals

Nuptials seem to be breaking out all over OTA. Rose Grozak, head of the medical services, is now Rose McNair, having married Claude of the same name... Mona Chick, formerly with the materials group, has married William "Yogi" DuVall... Nancy Shirk, who headed the residential energy conservation study, has tied the knot with Robert Naismith... Marriages planned for later this month include Linda Parker and Mick Riddlough, and Ruann Pengov and Robert Harcharik. Congratulations to all!