

III. GOVERNMENT REGULATION OF THE COMPUTER INDUSTRY:

A. COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS

The computer industry is dependent upon the same technology and serves the same market as the communications industry. Occasionally this technological and economic interdependence generates conflict. Wayne Robins details recent technological developments that are crucial to both industries and describes their fierce competition for markets. This interrelationship raises many problems which the federal government must resolve in order to control effectively the development of data communications. The present federal regulatory scheme is unsatisfactory, Herbert E. Marks and Stephen R. Bell maintain, because the areas within which the computer and communications industries may permissibly operate are not clearly defined. As a result, there is considerable overlap and competition. Congress and the FCC in its Second Computer Inquiry are presently considering new methods of regulation.

In his closing commentary, Charles R. Cutler discusses the effects of certain substantive regulations on both industries and considers whether regulations should be promulgated at the federal or state level. He concludes that the stakes are high and the contest for dominance between the computer and communications industries is not yet over.

