

over, express the hope that this publication will help facilitate dialogue and discussion with the aid of the multiplicity of viewpoints presented in the book. Each presentation is published in the original language it was written in; the only bilingual part of the book is the introduction, which is published in both Spanish and English.

Science policy in developing countries: the case of Mexico

José Luis Boldú and Juan Ramón de la Fuente, editors.

Ediciones Científicas Universitarias, UNAM/FCE, Mexico City, 1993. 272 pp.

Every "developing" nation which seeks to transform itself into a "developed" nation must establish effective policies for stimulating scientific and technological research. This effort, essential for generating adequate responses to problems and shortfalls in fields such as education, health care and industrial development, is a motor force for progress and economic independence.

An indispensable element for the advancement of scientific research is cooperation among government, institutions of higher education and the private sector, as well as international cooperation. Yet despite developing countries' awareness of the benefits of solid science and technology policies, the process of establishing firm conceptual foundations and effective, practical strategies is a complex one.

This book, published in the English language, compiles several experts' points of view—put forward in early 1991 during a workshop organized by UNAM in Cocoyoc, Morelos—regarding science and technology in the developing nations, with particular emphasis on the case of Mexico.

In evaluating the current state of science in developing countries,

these experts point to a serious shortage of scientific production. In the case of Mexico this is associated with a lack of investment in scientific research, the inefficient use of existing resources, as well as the lack of economic and social incentives for scientific professionals.

Moreover, in contrast to industrialized countries, in developing nations science and technology "interface" with the

private sector, face the task of changing this state of affairs. Policy-makers likewise need to promote the results of scientific research.

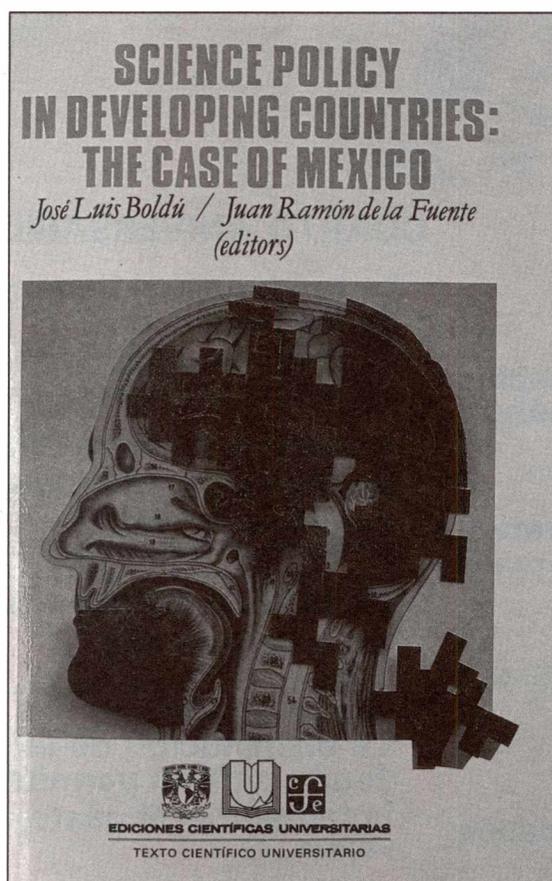
Also debated are the costs, benefits, risks and consequences of technology transfers, using the example of the health-care field. Contributors stress the importance of having an adequate infrastructure, trained personnel and essential equipment before the decision is made to import leading-edge

technology. A deep-going knowledge of the given country's concrete health problems, and real limitations, is key to evaluating the usefulness of such technology. In many cases imported technology has turned out to be an unwise investment.

It is indispensable that developing nations establish formal evaluation procedures for the rational acquisition of new equipment. These countries must also explore possibilities for designing their own technologies that would eliminate their dependence on the industrialized nations.

Lastly, the specialists contributing to this volume debate the links that should exist between industry and

science, as well as the role played by international cooperation among scientists from developed and developing nations, as part of the effort to reduce the technological and scientific gap that separates them **X**



domestic production of goods and services only at an incipient level, if at all. In other words, scientific knowledge is not an integral part of the economic system. Because of this, overall development is dependent on imported technology.

Institutions of higher education, with support from government and the

Elsie L. Montiel
Assistant Editor.