

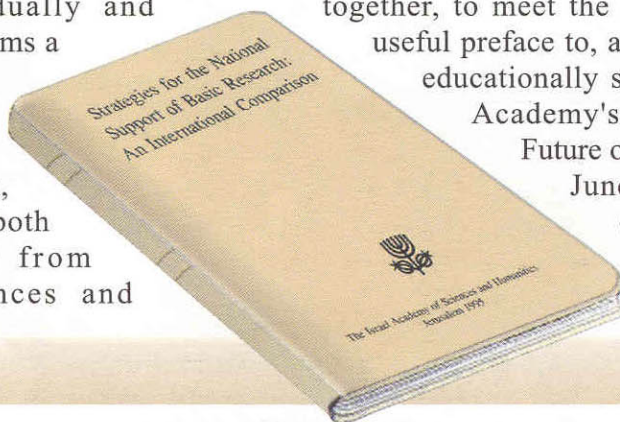
## The Brave New World of Basic Research

It once seemed so simple: science was progress. The atomic bomb, radar and other technological advances during World War II swiftly convinced both voters and politicians that research was power and that to fall behind was to court disaster. National security and prestige required major basic research expenditures and, in turn, promised to directly generate, through subsequent applied research and development (the so-called linear model), localized national benefits and prosperity. Although often suspicious, and occasionally even hostile, the university research community soon became used to, and successfully sought, ever larger amounts of government research largesse.

At the end of the Cold War, defense-related research resources were not redirected to the quest for basic knowledge. Instead, society began to cut back on its suddenly "optional" long-term research activities, while international economic competitiveness replaced security as the driving force for national funding. However, many non-research factors are involved in a profitable national "innovation" system and research benefits are hard to localize in an increasingly interconnected world. Indeed, defying the linear model, Japan had already shown that making money from research could be decoupled from personally doing it. Nor was the unease all one-sided. Many scientists resented public interference in their affairs, at the very time that society began demanding more scientific relevance. Meanwhile, universities looking for funds and companies looking for a competitive edge began forming "special relationships" at an accelerating rate. These were often overly abetted by national programs and policies designed to increase such linkages and technological transfer. In short, the environment, goals and rules of the game have all changed.

In order to explore the research implications of these and other issues in post-Cold War national science policy, the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, with support from the C. H. Revson Foundation (USA), invited an impressive array of world science policy leaders to a major International Conference on Strategies for the National Support of Basic Research: An International Comparison. (Jerusalem, October 23-26, 1994). Underlining Israel's determination to take an active role in this area, the late Israel Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin personally attended and addressed the conference, just two days before signing Israel's historic peace treaty with Jordan (the ceremony was viewed live by the participants during the conference).

The conference's important addresses and lively discussions were summarized in a 360-page, hardcover proceedings sponsored, as a public service, by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The material was reorganized and edited to create a highly readable, informative and still quite current introduction to some of the most pressing issues and long-term trends in modern science policy, and what nations around the world have done, individually and together, to meet the challenges of change. As such, it forms a useful preface to, and framework for, the more educationally specific issues addressed in the Israel Academy's more recent workshop on The Future of the Research (Jerusalem, June 1-3, 1999). The proceedings of both conferences are available directly from the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities.



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