

Planning Science and Technology in Taiwan: Wu Ta-you and the Commission for Science Development

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ABSTRACT

The appearance of a science policy in Taiwan started in 1967, when the Commission for Science Development (CSD) was organized under the National Security Council. Founded by President Chiang Kai-shek, the principles and organization of the CSD differed from previous efforts in promoting science by academics such as Hu Shih and Wang Shih-chieh. Wu Ta-you, who was invited by the President to direct the CSD, drafted a long-term plan for scientific development from the viewpoint of “national need” instead of “academic independence”. Based upon the American model, his emphasis on basic research caused arguments about the priority of applied science. Was the top-down policy of CSD suitable for Taiwan’s society? This paper explores the relationship between basic science and so-called national construction, and its effect on controversies about national defense and industrial research.

Keywords: Wu Ta-you, Li Kuo-ting, Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Ching-kuo,
Commission for Science Development (CSD), National Science Council
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