



On November 7, the mayor of Parral, a commune of the province of Linares in Chile, issued an instruction prohibiting the use of the STOPP STAR criterion by any staff member of the Municipal Health Department, especially by doctors who work in that Department. Officials who do not comply with this instruction were to be sanctioned with the corresponding disciplinary processes.

The justification for this instruction is that the STOP STARR criterion is not indicated in any official document of the Ministry of Health of Chile. The instructive also points out that, when consulting the scientific literature, evidence of the benefits of this criterion was found. However, the same evidence indicates that a multidisciplinary team and permanent controls are necessary. Apparently, these conditions of multidisciplinary and permanent controls do not exist in the commune of Parral.

The relationship between politics and science in Chile is strained. Despite the recent approval of the creation of a Ministry of Science, the 2019 budget for science was reduced. In addition, Mario Hamuy recently resigned as President of the National Commission of Science and Technology (CONICYT), which is the main scientific institution in Chile and has three main objectives: (a) to strengthen the scientific and technological base of the country; (b) promote the training of advanced human capital; and (c) promote a scientific and technological culture in the population.

Science and politics seem to work in parallel universes. With elections every 4 years, political work seems tied to short-term measures, while scientific progress is based on the sum of small contributions over decades. Politicians (in theory) respond to voters, although unfortunately in Chile and much of the world politicians seem to respond to a number of other interests. Scientists (in theory) respond to scientific progress, by peer-review, but in practice they are also influenced by many other interests.

Some have proposed that scientists participate more in politics or that politicians participate more in science. At least in recent decades, I cannot recall any politician or scientist who has managed to move to the other side of the path generating a significant and lasting impact. The skills, concerns, and goals of politicians and scientists are not the same. But there is a higher interest, the well being of people, which is or should be shared by politicians and scientists. The parallel

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universes of scientists and politicians are within a macro-universe where the well being of people must prevail.

One way to ensure that scientists and politicians co-inhabit this macro-universe is to reinforce the third goal of CONICYT: to promote a scientific and technological culture in the population. Achieving this will allow us to approach the interests and deadlines with which politicians and scientists work.

According to the National Survey of Social Perception of Science and Technology in Chile in 2016, a large proportion of Chileans value science and technology. However, a more relevant fact is that only 17% recognize at least one institution dedicated to science and technology (CONICYT, 2016). This data indicates that we are very far from a population with a scientific and technological culture.

The path to establishing a country where science and technology are priorities is long and arduous, as is scientific progress. But like scientific progress, it is one of the best ways to achieve greater well-being for all.

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