

has some distinct advantages," she said.

The approximately 80 nations that have approved Depo-Provera are split evenly between developed and developing countries. They include Belgium, where an Upjohn subsidiary manufactures the drug for overseas distribution, France, Sweden, West Germany, and Norway. Depo-Provera, however, recently received a setback in Britain. The drug is already approved there as a contraceptive for a small group of women whose husbands recently have had vasectomies or for whom no other contraceptive is acceptable. The Committee on Safety of Medicines this year recommended to the government that the drug be approved for a larger, although limited, group of women. Similar to initial FDA approval, the committee advised that Depo-Provera use be restricted to only women who find other methods unsatisfactory or who suffer unacceptable side effects from them.

Apparently for the first time in the ministry's history, Britain's top health officer went against the committee's advice and proposed not to approve the drug for greater distribution. Kenneth Clarke, the new health minister, said in a letter to Upjohn and the committee that in his opinion the risks outweigh the benefits. Opponents of Depo-Provera, including a group called "Ban the Jab," had been quite active, according to a ministry spokesman.

Upjohn appealed the minister's action, which in the past has always been interpreted as a final decision. A hearing is to be held in November.

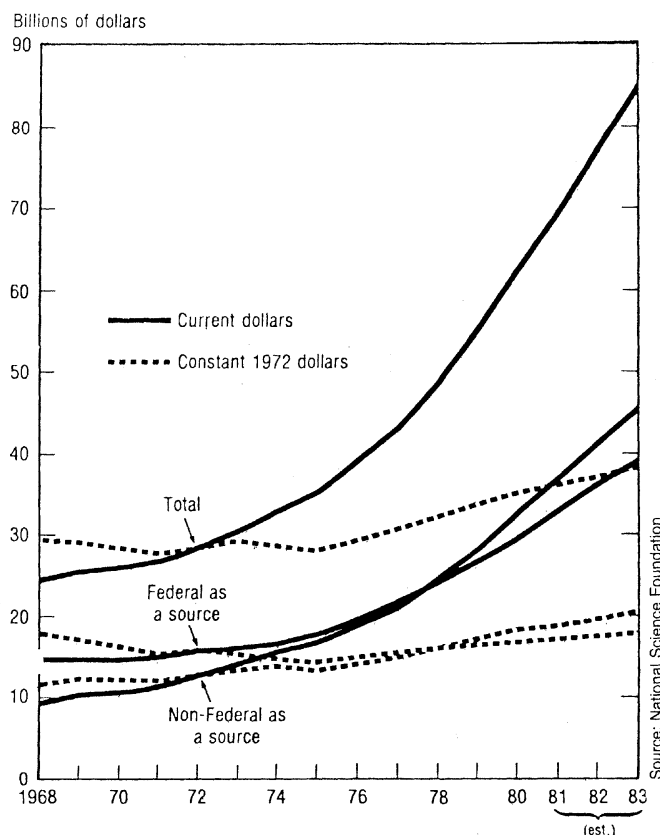
For the Agency for International Development, the Depo-Provera issue is particularly sensitive. Although many developing countries have requested assistance to acquire the drug, AID's hands are tied because of its policy not to export drugs lacking FDA's stamp of approval. Foreign governments complain that AID's position is righteous and paternalistic. The agency came under so much pressure to put up the money for purchase and to supply the drug that AID assembled an ad hoc panel in 1980 to review the scientific data and make a recommendation. The committee members, of whom at least half were population experts, advised AID to make an exception for Depo-Provera and allow its export because of the drug's outstanding merits. But AID has so far not altered its policy and still does not either export the drug or directly finance its purchase domestically or overseas.

A spokeswoman for the Population Crisis Committee, based in Washington, D.C., says that one factor that may have

Industrial R & D Rises

While attention has been focused on the ups and downs in federal support for research and development in the past few years, corporations have been steadily increasing their outlays on R & D. This trend was apparent well before Congress approved special tax incentives to encourage corporate R & D, and it seems to confound the oft-repeated myth that expenditures on research are among the first to suffer during a recession.

Fresh evidence for this continued expansion of privately funded R & D comes from the annual survey of corporate expenditures on research and development published by *Business Week*.^{*} According to the survey, major research corporations in the United States increased their outlays on R & D



by 15.1 percent in 1981, or about 6 percent faster than the rate of inflation. And this boost occurred in spite of the fact that the economy was in the grip of a deep recession.

Moreover, according to a recent projection by the National Science Foundation, equally impressive increases are expected in 1982 and 1983. On the basis of a survey of top officials of major research corporations, NSF says it expects to see a 12 percent rise in corporate R & D spending this year and an 11 percent boost in 1983.[†]

Spearheading these increases are companies in sectors such as computer manufacturing and information processing, which are experiencing increasing competition from abroad. According to the *Business Week* figures, such companies generally boosted their R & D spending by at least 20 percent last year, and in some cases the increases amounted to more than 30 percent. The biggest single spenders, however, continued to be General Motors (\$2.25 billion) and Ford Motor Company (\$1.72 billion), with AT&T (\$1.686 billion) and IBM (\$1.612 billion) not far behind.

As a result of this steady expansion of corporate-funded R & D, private industry now supports more than half the total R & D in the United States; 15 years ago, it funded less than one-third.—COLIN NORMAN

^{*}*Business Week*, 5 July 1982.

[†]National Science Foundation, *Science Resources Studies*, NSF 82-311, June 1982.