

## Jorge Mardones: *Oration* at his funeral service<sup>\*</sup>, <sup>\*\*</sup>

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*Oration at the funeral service of Prof Jorge Mardones, MD. A very successful and influential pharmacologist, he was Chairman of the Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Chile; President of the Academy of Sciences, Institute of Chile; National Prize of Sciences, 1977; and Minister of Public Health. He also served as Chief Editor of "Archivos de Biología y Medicina Experimentales" (former name of this journal) between 1964 and 1978.*

**Key-terms:** Jorge Mardones, obituary, pharmacology.

On this solemn occasion, I can not remain silent. With deep sorrow I have come to bid farewell to Jorge Mardones, one of my most cherished and admired classmates, with whom I shared a long path full of common concerns and hopes.

Attracted by Prof Eduardo Cruz-Coke's wise and magnetic personality, we were fortunate –as many other medical students at the University of Chile– to join a group under his guidance. With his prophetic vision of the world he opened our eyes to unsuspected horizons, showing us the enormous potential that scientific research was reaching in Europe at that time. Particularly, he used to talk with us about the surprising advances in the biology field and their direct contributions to medicine. We heard for the first time that the scientific and technological development of a country was vital for achieving both economic and social progress. Jorge Mardones understood –among the very few– the essence of this message that definitively enlightened most of his work both as a medical doctor and a scientist.

He devoted most of his academic career to improve the precarious scientific development of several national institutions and organisms in which he worked, especially in the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Chile and the Institute of Physical Education. He pursued with perseverance his pioneering research line on problems related to alcohol appetite and satiety, contributing with new data until shortly before his death. His major achievement and probably his most cherished aspiration was the foundation of the Institute of Pharmacology. With great effort but much success, he was able to recruit a great team of researchers, from where the most distinguished pharmacologists have arisen.

In recognition of his research work and his important contributions to the development of pharmacology, Prof Mardones was awarded the National Prize of Sciences in 1977.

He was appointed President of the Chilean Academy of Sciences, where he served with unstinting devotion and natural ability. His main interest was to look after the development of culture and the advan-

\* Cemetery "Parque del Recuerdo", Santiago, Chile; 4th November 1998.

\*\* Translated by Carolina Larraín, Assistant Editor, Biological Research.

cement of science, which he believed were the main responsibilities of the Academy.

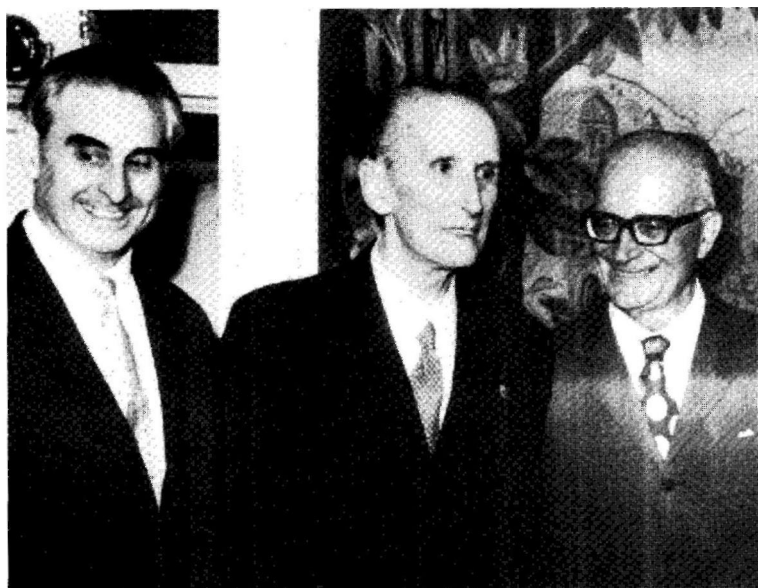
Because of Prof Mardones' vast experience in the field of pharmacology and the remarkable progress achieved by the discovery of new drugs, he was appointed Minister of Public Health. He implemented modern measures for improving the control and use of drugs. He also successfully organized the By-Laws of Medical Public Officials and established the full-time position for some jobs. Also, he managed to incorporate in the national budget a special fund allocated to young researchers who devoted many hours of research work in different areas, without any payment. This meant a great stimulus

for improving the economically depressed scientific research of the country.

Thanks to Prof Mardones' geniality and great love of his job, Chile has since 1979 a National Drug Reference Book, three years ahead of a similar work approved by the World Health Organization.

These words seem rather poor to describe Prof Mardones' remarkable intellectual abilities, his deep and balanced vision of the human being, and his untiring search of those initiatives that dignify the man's life and its institutions.

Your country, your family and your friends, we are all here to pay homage to you, being sure that you have already found the Divine Light and Everlasting Life.



From left to right: Professors Jorge Mardones, Eduardo Cruz-Coke and Héctor Croxatto.