

dence to Roger Anderson's theory," said Frank Parker, chairman of a National Research Council panel studying WIPP and a professor at Vanderbilt University.

In addition to the salt beds, DOE found the state an attractive location for the repository because its citizens are more accustomed to nuclear issues than those of other states, given New Mexi-

### Deputy News Editors Named

Two newly established positions in the News Department will be filled by Colin Norman and Roger Lewin. Norman has been appointed deputy editor for News and Comment. Lewin will serve as deputy editor for Research News.—B.J.C.

co's history of nuclear weapons development at Los Alamos. "DOE found a state that was much more used to radwaste," said Timothy Glidden, who is the Republican counsel for the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee and a resident of New Mexico.

But New Mexico has remained uncomfortable about the proposed dump primarily because there were several attempts to change the purpose of WIPP during the Carter Administration. In 1979 an interagency task force recommended that dump sites storing transuranic waste should be licensed because, it said, the long-term hazards are comparable to those of high-level waste. Carter took this recommendation further and proposed that WIPP diverge from its original purpose and accept 1000 commercial spent fuel assemblies in addition to transuranic waste and high-level waste from the defense program. This would have given the Nuclear Regulatory Commission some licensing authority over WIPP. A complicated turf battle ensued involving the White House, DOE, and the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Melvin Price (D-Ill.). Price wanted WIPP free of any licensing oversight by an agency outside his committee's jurisdiction and was successful in convincing his congressional colleagues to restrict the project to defense wastes. Incensed at this turn of events, Carter then canceled the project in February 1980, but Congress restored \$20 million to the WIPP budget to keep the project alive.

Meanwhile, New Mexico was alarmed at the possibility that if WIPP accepted commercial spent fuel, it could become the nation's warehouse for high-level waste. The state then proceeded to seek the power to veto the project at any stage, but DOE dug in its heels and took the position that national security interests superseded the state's rights. The department said it would go so far as to consult with the state about any changes or problems concerning the repository. But federal legislation passed in 1979 provided for a "consultation and cooperation agreement" that watered down New Mexico's rights even more. "None of us knew what the agreement meant," said George S. Goldstein, New Mexico's secretary of health and the environment.

New Mexico's troubles continued. According to the 1979 law, DOE was to sign the consultation and cooperation pact with New Mexico by the end of September 1980. But the federal and state governments debated the terms of the agreement for more than a year. New Mexico insisted on a pact that would be enforceable by law and subject to judicial review, but the DOE did not want to make it legally binding.

On 14 May 1981, New Mexico sued DOE, alleging that the department had "refused to agree to a legally enforceable document to resolve these issues." Less than 2 months later, the DOE and the state reached a compromise agreement and consented to stay the lawsuit, pending review at a later date of each party's compliance.

Before the lawsuit, "it was obvious we were not getting the timely, accurate information about WIPP that we felt Congress intended," Bingaman said. Since the lawsuit was filed, "communications have improved substantially," he said.

But the discovery of the brine pocket could test the strength of the latest federal-state agreement. "The critical test of the site is coming up," Goldstein said. "I've asked them [DOE officials] what are the thresholds of acceptability? Is it that brine is beneath the site? Beneath the site and 200 feet away? I asked the question rhetorically, but if there's ever been a critical time to answer it it's now." That sense of urgency is increased somewhat because this is an election year for gubernatorial and U.S. Senate seats, and WIPP could become a campaign issue.

New Mexico officials are trying to sort out the scientific issues for themselves. In 1979, the state requested that an independent scientific panel be established at

(Continued on page 1486)

## A Plan to Give an Apple to Every U.S. School

Because Steven Jobs, president and founder of Apple Computer Corporation, happened to sit next to Representative Fortney H. (Pete) Stark (D-Calif.) on a flight from California to Washington last month, one of the largest corporate donations ever made to precollege education may soon take place. During the long journey, Jobs and Stark hatched a scheme that could result in the gift of an Apple computer system to every elementary and secondary school in the United States. The total donation would be valued at \$200 million to \$300 million at retail prices.

In return, Apple would be able to write off a substantial fraction of the cost of the computers against taxes. It would also, of course, score a major publicity coup and ensure that a whole generation of future consumers is introduced to computers in general and Apples in particular.

The key to all of this is a bill introduced by Stark on 23 February, which rapidly became known as the Apple Bill. (Its official title is the Technology Education Act of 1982.) In essence, it would permit Apple and any other company that donates scientific equipment to schools to deduct the full cost of the equipment from its pretax income. Gifts to schools would thus be treated, for tax purposes, the same as gifts to colleges and universities. In addition, the bill would raise the maximum allowable charitable contribution from 10 percent to 30 percent of a corporation's income. Both provisions would last for only 1 year after the act is passed.

Although the financial impact of the bill has not yet been calculated in detail, congressional staff members have estimated that it would permit Apple to take a deduction of about \$75 million. This would represent the cost of manufacturing the computers, but not the cost of training manuals, servicing, and so on. (If Apple pays at the maximum corporate tax rate of 46 percent, this would result in a tax saving of about \$35 million.)

The bill was introduced with two other cosponsors, Don Edwards and George Miller, both California Democrats. Within a week, however, it had