taking their complaints to Capitol Hill, where they seem to be getting a more sympathetic hearing. Senators Mark Hatfield (R–OR) and Lowell Weicker (R–CT), who occupy key spots on the Senate Appropriations Committee, have written to OMB director James Miller asking him to withdraw the proposal. And Representatives Don Fuqua (D–FL), Walgren, Manuel Lujan, Jr. (R–NM), and Sherwood Boehlert (R–NY), who sit on the House Committee on Science and Technology, have asked OMB to extend the comment period to 90 days and suspend implementation of the proposal.

Unless OMB changes its mind, the only way Congress will block the proposal will be to pass legislation forbidding the cuts. A move is, in fact, already afoot to insert language into a continuing appropriations bill that would do just that. ■

COLIN NORMAN

NSF Designates Five New Engineering Centers

The National Science Foundation has announced the selection of universities to operate five new engineering research centers. The multidisciplinary centers will receive up to $56.3 million from NSF over the next 5 years. Additional funding is expected from industry.

The five new centers bring the total of NSF engineering research centers to 11, including the first six established by the foundation last year (*Science*, 19 April 1985, p. 305). Competition for the new centers attracted 102 proposals from 75 institutions.

The successful institutions and their centers:

- Brigham Young University and Utah State University, a joint venture; Advanced Combustion Research Engineering Center.
- Carnegie-Mellon University; Engineering Research Center for Engineering Design.
- University of Illinois–Urbana; Engineering Research Center for Compound Semiconductor Microelectronics.
- Lehigh University; Engineering Research Center on Advanced Technology for Large Structural Systems.
- Ohio State University; Engineering Research Center for Net Shape Manufacturing. (The term "net shape manufacturing" denotes processes that give manufactured parts nearly final form.)

Planned funding totals would vary among the centers from $9.7 million to nearly $15 million over 5 years.

The engineering research centers are intended to enhance U.S. economic competitiveness by encouraging multidisciplinary research on problems relevant to industry. NSF's original plan for the program called for establishment of as many as 20 engineering research centers, with funding of up to $100 million a year.

This year, $23 million is earmarked for support of the centers. The Administration budget for next year requests $35 million for the centers, enough to establish an additional four centers. ■ JOHN WALSH

House Science Committee Chairman Leaving Congress

After 24 years in the House of Representatives, Don Fuqua (D–FL) has decided to call it quits. In a surprise announcement on 14 March, Fuqua, who has chaired the House Committee on Science and Technology for the past 7 years, said he will not be running for reelection later this year.

His departure is likely to mean that the science committee chairmanship will go to Representative Robert A. Roe (D–NJ), the next most senior Democrat on the committee. Roe has been a member of the House since 1969 and has sat on the science committee ever since he was elected to Congress. He has not played a very active role in scientific affairs, however. For example, he has chosen in the past to retain chairmanship of a public works subcommittee rather than chair a science and technology subcommittee.

Robert A. Roe

Next in line for Fuqua's job.

This has led to some speculation that Roe will not seek the chairmanship, but he announced last week that he is interested in the position. He is said to be well liked and it is unlikely that he would be successfully challenged.

The next in line after Roe is Representative George E. Brown, Jr. (D–CA), who has been a very active member of the committee. Brown, in fact, has more years of service in Congress than Roe, but he left Congress for a couple of years in the early 1970's to make an unsuccessful run for the governorship of California, which puts him behind Roe in seniority.

Fuqua has not indicated what he will do next, but he is said to be staying in Washington. At age 52, he is young enough to pursue a second career.

With major decisions looming in the next year or so on the space program and the superconducting super collider, both of which come under the purview of the Committee on Science and Technology, Fuqua is leaving at a critical time. He will, however, oversee completion of a major study of federal science policy currently being conducted by a task force he chairs. A draft of the study is expected in early June and, following another round of hearings in the summer, a final report will be produced in the fall. ■ COLIN NORMAN

NSF to Establish Computer Directorate

Computer science and applications have transformed practically every aspect of science and engineering important to the National Science Foundation, but have proved awkward to fit into the NSF table of organization. Now they are to get a home of their own in NSF in a Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering.

How to give computer matters a better focus in NSF has been a topic of discussion for some time. Announcing his intention to establish the new directorate, NSF director Erich Bloch told members of the National Science Board at their 21 March meeting that he had decided to proceed with the new directorate because he had found the right person to run it.

The prospective assistant director for CISE, the inevitable acronymic, is Gordon Bell, former vice president of engineering at Digital Equipment Corporation and a computer architect of renown. Bell headed the design work in the middle 1970's that produced the VAX-11, which became the workhorse of academic computing. While at Car-