

Planning and Budget put together for the Sonora Fair. Thousands of the Annual Report of the year 2031 were distributed at the Fair. It presents the results of a 50 year industrial development plan. By that year the population of Sonora would have grown from the current 1.5 million to 5 million. The standards of living of the population would be the highest in the entire country and many new cities would have been built. (See box.)

The Sonora government booth presented the same concept of what Sonora would look like by the year 2031, employing audiovisual and other displays to show the advanced development that the state could achieve. A key feature in the Sonora development plan is the installation of nuclear-based agro-industrial complexes, known as nuplexes. According to a video tape shown in the booth, by the year 2031 Sonora would have two pairs of nuclear power plants that would be the center of two new agro-industrial cities. The energy, and especially the waste heat from these plants, would be used to desalinate water. This water would be used for irrigation and would start solving one of the major

obstacles for agricultural production in the region.

Nuclear energy, a political fight

The emphasis put by the Sonora planners on nuclear energy has nation-wide political significance. Until recently, Mexico has consistently postponed the initiation of a full-scale nuclear development program due to political sabotage from inside the government of López Portillo. In addition, several attempts to at least start researching nuclear energy in Mexico have been countered by local authorities. This is the case of a project for a nuclear research center planned to be built in the state of Michoacán where the governor, a devoted environmentalist, turned down the federal government proposal in the name of "protecting the environment."

Reliable sources report that the Sonora government is fighting behind the scene to get approval for building the research center in the state of Sonora. Although the government of the state of Nuevo León also wants it, it is known that Sonora has excellent possibilities of gaining the project.

*The AMEF exhibit:
at left is Director
Cecilia Soto de Estévez.*



AMEF exhibit draws a gigantic response

Out of all the hundreds of booths that integrated the Sonora '81 Fair, the booth sponsored by Mexican Association of Fusion Energy (AMEF) was the most visited. Hundreds of businessmen, hundreds of potential investors, hundreds of professionals, and thousands of students from five-year olds to college students, stopped at the AMEF booth to ask questions, ranging from the technical to intensely political.

The feature that most absorbed the visitors was a half-hour videotape explaining how nuclear fusion energy works, and polemicizing against the international environmentalist movement. Many visitors re-

turned several times to the AMEF booth with further questions.

The AMEF, publishers of the Spanish magazine, *Fusión*, borrowed several scale models of American nuclear plants to be exhibited at the booth. Two of those models were the Clinch River liquid-metal fast-breeder reactor, and the high-temperature gas-cooled reactor under construction by General Atomic of San Diego. The walls of the booth were covered with enlarged photos of nuclear plants in various stages of construction, and the latest discoveries of the solar system, including Saturn pictures taken by Voyager.