



● La Silla
● La Serena
● Santiago

● Munich
● Geneva

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Italy and Switzerland to Become Members of ESO

On 26 March the ESO Council, meeting in Geneva in special session, unanimously accepted Italy and Switzerland as new Member States in the Organization. This membership could become effective early in 1981, if the required parliamentary ratification procedure in the two countries will have been successfully completed.

According to the ESO Convention, new Member States have to pay a special contribution corresponding to their share in the investments made in the past. In fixing the amount of this contribution, the ESO Council also decided that it will be used to expand the observing facilities at La Silla. At present, these facilities are already heavily oversubscribed, and this could only become more so with a 25-per-cent increase in the user community. It is envisaged to build a 3.5-m telescope with a thin light-weight mirror, which could be completed within five years after final project approval. This telescope—the NTT (New Technology Telescope)—will give a much needed increase in the available large telescope observing time. Also, it will be valuable in obtaining the technological knowledge needed for the development of the large telescopes of the future, like the VLT.

With the entry of Italy and Switzerland, ESO will be more able to fulfil one of its principal tasks, to foster cooperation in astronomy in Europe. We welcome our colleagues from these two countries and look forward with anticipation to their full participation in all ESO activities.

L. Woltjer
Director-General

Quasars Resolved

P. A. Wehinger, T. Gehren and S. Wyckoff

While observers have obtained spectra of more than 1,400 quasars since they were discovered in 1963, fewer than one per cent have been studied by direct imaging techniques at significantly faint surface brightness levels and high angular resolution to detect anything more than a bright point-like source. La

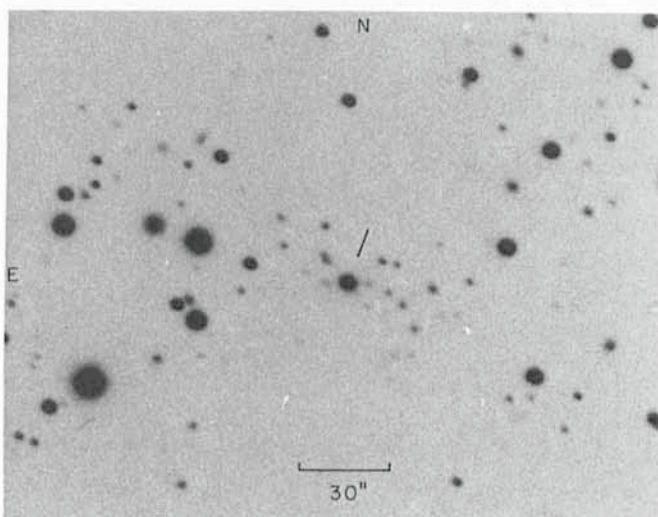


Fig. 1: The quasar 3C 206 ($z = 0.200$), at centre. ESO 3.6-m prime focus plate (Kodak IIIa-F + Schott OG 570). Note clustering of faint (20–22 mag) objects within ~ 40 arc sec of the QSO. ▶