



Professor Harry van der Laan shows the model of the ESO La Silla observatory to the Queen. In the background Prince Henrik, Mr. Ebbe Fogh-Hansen (Chairman of the Urania Foundation) and at the right, Mr. Bertil Haarder, Minister of Education.

astronomer had to leave when support to his observatory on the island of Hven was withdrawn by King Christian IV.

Plans for a major planetarium in Copenhagen were made already in the 1960's, but had to be shelved when no agreement could be reached about the site. However, the Tycho Brahe Planetarium is now situated on one of the most beautiful spots in the central city area, next to Sankt Jørgens Lake, and only 5 minutes' walk from the famous Tivoli Gardens. The management expects about 400,000 visitors a year, and facilities for multi-language presentations have been implemented to cater for the many tourists who pass through the Danish capital. It is good to note the heavy involvement of amateur and professional astronomers in the daily life at the planetarium; the first school classes have already been received and the evening courses given under the auspices of "Peoples' University", now held at the planetarium, report the highest number of students of all ages ever recorded.

The planetarium also includes an OM-NIMAX projector; the first films to be shown are "Sacred Site" about Comet Halley, and "The Dream is Alive" about the US Space Shuttle. There is also a much-visited restaurant, "Cassiopeia". No doubt that the public will be attracted!

Judging from the enormous interest of the Danish media in this event there is

every hope that astronomy in Denmark will greatly profit from this new facility. Who knows how many young, potential "Tychos" will be deflected in our direc-

tion after a visit to the Tycho Brahe Planetarium? We at ESO are happy to contribute to this noble cause.

R. M. West



ESA Price Winners Visit ESO

On November 16, seventeen young Europeans visited ESO and the Space Telescope European Coordinating Facility at the invitation of the European Space Agency. They were the winners of an ESA Essay competition based on the theme "Astronomy from Space" – chosen because of the impending launches of the Hipparcos satellite and of the Hubble Space Telescope. The visit, which included practical demonstrations of MIDAS and a tour of the Optical and Photo Labs, was very much appreciated by the young people (all of them high-school students) and was crowned by a warm convivial happening with ESO and ECF staff in a typical Munich downtown restaurant.

P. Benvenuti (ST-ECF)