The December 1989 commissioning run at the NTT represented also the culmination of two other important developments carried out at ESO in the field of optical detectors. The CCD was installed with a new, versatile control camera based on commercially available VME-bus boards and on custom-made boards interfacing the CCD to the VME-bus. The camera (Reiss et al., 1989, SPIE Vol. 1170) was developed in the ESO electronics lab in the last three years and finds a wide range of applications in present and future ESO instruments.

The CCD was installed in the dewar on a new front-end also designed at ESO for use with CCDs as large as 6 x 6 cm (Fig. 3). Other novel features of the new mounting are the location of the pre-amplifier board close to the chip to minimize the system noise and various artifices adopted to maximize the thermal insulation and to facilitate a precise spatial adjustment of the chips.

**Figure 2:** The quantum efficiency curve of the TH 31156 CCD (ESO #17) after coating in the ESO laboratory.

**Figure 3:** A view of the TH 31156, 1024² pixels CCD on the new mounting designed and realized at ESO. With a 2.3-l liquid nitrogen tank, the dewar can operate the CCD at the required temperature of 140 °K for periods longer than 24 hours without refilling.