

of Washington. The observation was carried out by Dr. R. M. West of ESO (editors always have to do the job!) who was taking spectra of ESO/Uppsala galaxies. The dispersion was the same as for the galaxies: 284 Å/mm from 3700 Å to 7200 Å.

The spectra are reproduced here and solve the "mystery" of the very red star: it is nothing but a "normal" carbon star. The typical bands of diatomic carbon (C<sub>2</sub>) are seen at 4734 Å, 5165 Å and 5636 Å; they are known as the Swan bands. It can also be easily understood why the star appears so red: there is simply no light in the blue end of the spectrum, below 4700 Å!

Quite a number of carbon stars are known in the southern Milky Way. The most comprehensive catalogue was published in 1971 by the former ESO Director in Chile, Professor B. Westerlund, who is now at the Uppsala Observatory in Sweden. This catalogue comprises 1,124 carbon stars, but since it starts south of declination -22°, the present star is not included.

Carbon stars were recognized already in the 19th century by astronomers like Father Secchi who classified the brightest stars visually through a small spectroscope. Since then the classification of carbon stars has undergone vast improvements and it is now generally believed that they are giant stars. It is very difficult to measure the temperature of a carbon star because of the heavy molecular bands in the blue, but most have temperatures around 3,000–4,000°K. The reason for their massive carbon-overabundance is not well understood.

*Note added in proof:*

Dr. N. Sanduleak of the Warner and Swasey Observatory has kindly informed us that this star is no. 744 in "A General Catalogue of Cool Carbon Stars" compiled by Dr. C. B. Stephenson (1973). Unfortunately this catalogue was not available at ESO/Geneva.

## Some Recent Developments in ESO

While the successful completion of the ESO 3.6-m telescope was making the headlines, some other important developments were hardly noticed.

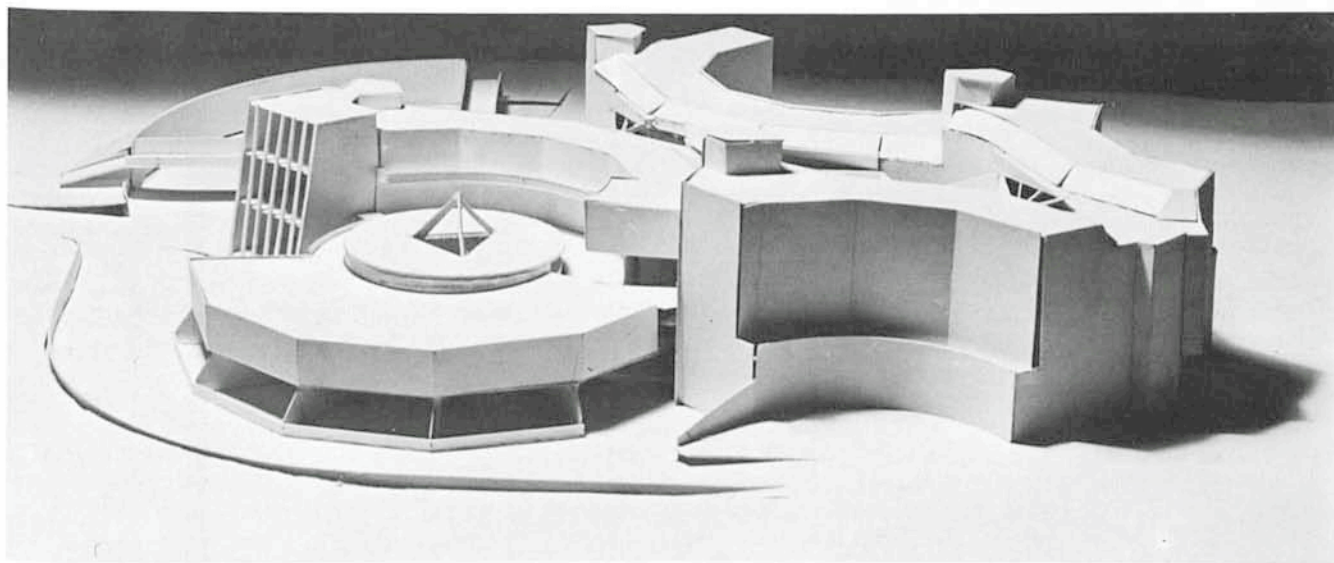
### Auxiliary Construction Programme Nearing Completion

On La Silla, construction activities have been making rapid progress: the warehouse, the maintenance workshop, the four new Pelicano "dormitories" and the club house, the office and library building as well as the astro-workshop have been completed and are already in full use. The Pelicano water-treatment plant, the new heating plant and the gasoline station are finished or almost finished. Thus the Auxiliary Construction programme is now virtually completed.

### Green Light for the ESO Headquarters Building

In Europe, an important step has been made towards the construction of the future ESO Headquarters in Garching. At its meeting of April 22, 1977 the Working Group created by the Council to deal with the planning of the Headquarters approved the plans submitted by Fehling and Gogel architects in Berlin. On the basis of these plans, tenders will be invited later this year, and construction activities are expected to start at the beginning of 1978. According to the time schedule, the building should be ready in the course of the second half of 1979. It will then house all ESO European activities carried out at present in Geneva and Garching.

A model of the building shown below will already give our readers an idea of the future appearance of the ESO Headquarters. The architects assure that the final product will significantly surpass this model in structural stability!



Architects cardboard model of the European Headquarters building to be constructed at Garching. The view is from the rear of the building and does not show the main entrance.