

to understand the formation and evolution of such a complex.

References

- Bedijn, P., Tenorio-Tagle, G., 1979, *Astron. Astrophys.* submitted.
Bodenheimer, P., Tenorio-Tagle, G. Yorke, H. W., 1979, *Astrophys. J.* (in press).
Cullum, M., Fosbury, R., 1979, ESO Internal Report.
Neckel, T., 1978, *Astron. Astrophys.* **69**, 51.
Peimbert, M., Review talk, 1979, A. A. S. Mexico.
Spitzer, L., Jr., 1968, *Diffuse Matter in Space*. Ed. John Wiley and Sons Inc.
Tenorio-Tagle, G., 1979, *Astron. Astrophys.* **71**, 59.

ESO/SRC Conference on APPLICATIONS OF CAMAC TO ASTRONOMY

The Proceedings of this conference, held in Geneva in September 1978, are now available. Copies can be obtained, free of charge, from:

European Southern Observatory
c/o CERN
Attn. M. J. Cullum
1211 Geneva 23
Switzerland

NEWS AND NOTES

The Supernova That Was Not . . .

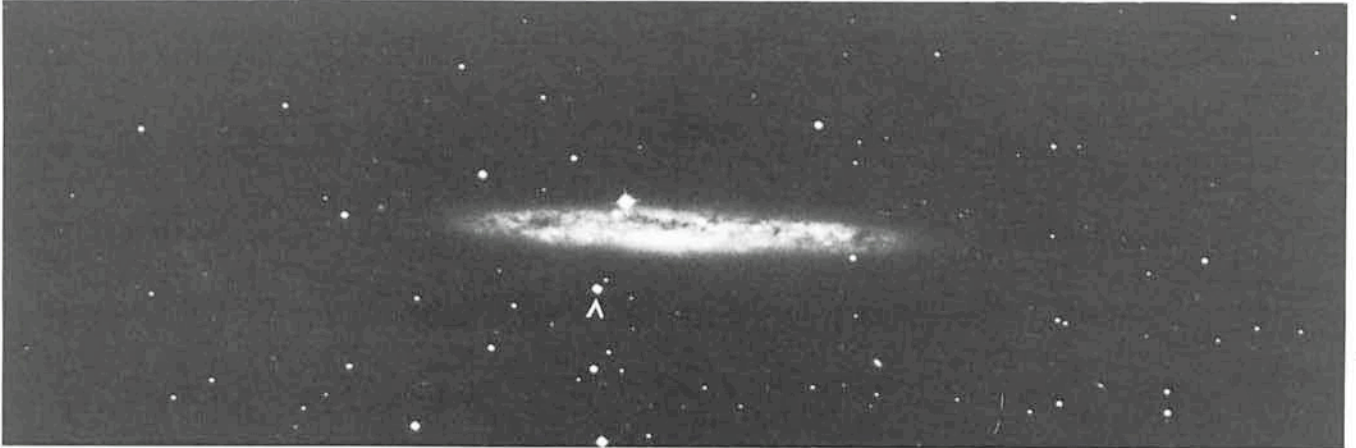
The ESO 1 m Schmidt telescope is a major supplier of observational material to many European astronomers. The plates are taken by the ESO observers on La Silla, sent by diplomatic bag to the Sky Atlas Laboratory in Geneva, registered and checked and then forwarded to the astronomer who asked for the plates to be taken.

Two plates were taken during the month of May 1979 for one of these programmes, showing the galaxy NGC 4517. It so happened that the ESO astronomer who checked the plates in

Geneva (R. West) noticed that there was an additional, apparently stellar image (see arrow) on one of the plates, near the galaxy.

A supernova was strongly indicated, although the position in the galaxy, far from the main plane, was somewhat peculiar. And suddenly it became clear that the image was on the plate that was taken *first*, but not on the *second*! Who has ever heard about a supernova that disappears in the course of ten days?

The mystery was quickly solved. A print-out of the minor planets in the field showed that at the position of the supposed supernova, the 13^m.5 minor planet (268) ADOREA would have been virtually stationary (i. e. not moving as seen from the Earth) at the exact time of the first plate, but well away from the galaxy on the second plate. A careful inspection of the image also shows that it is slightly elongated, confirming the explanation.



Two photos of galaxy NGC 4517, both 2-hour exposures on IIIa-J emulsion behind a GG385 filter, obtained with the ESO Schmidt telescope on May 18 (upper) and May 28 (lower), 1979.