

MEMORANDUM

To: R. Giacconi and P. Vanden Bout

From: R. L. Brown and E. J. Hardy

Subject: Meetings with CONICYT and ESO Friday October 15, 1999

CONICYT

We met with Oscar Riveros over lunch. This was a disconnected conversation with Oscar giving us pieces of information that we had to try to put together in coherent form and then get him to confirm. These are the major points:

1. CONICYT is once again pushing to have the new Law for Astronomy acted on by the Senate. Consideration of this law is among the issues that could be considered by the Senate in the remaining 4 months of the present term. However, it is not among issues presented to the Senate *with urgency*. [We confirmed all this with our attorney, Martin Gubbins, who discovered that the Senate Education committee will hold hearings starting on Wednesday October 20—the Astronomy Law being one of many issues the committee will hear over a period of several weeks].
2. ESO, Daniel and Catherine, visited CONICYT on October 13 and gave Oscar a draft of an agreement permitting them to conduct site testing on Chajnantor. This agreement is mostly copied from our agreement for site testing (but see ESO section below).
3. CONICYT is doing absolutely nothing at all to draft a ‘lease’ for ALMA to use the site. Oscar is expecting us to provide CONICYT with *points of reference* for such an agreement. When we do so he will have our draft reviewed by the CONICYT astronomy advisory committee and by the radio astronomy advisory sub-committee.
4. CONICYT would like a *seat* on the ACC with voting rights. [This contradicts Sarrazin’s letter to RG in which he wanted to attend meetings for information purposes].
5. Oscar (and Sarrazin?) has hatched an idea to establish a private Foundation or Corporation to *manage astronomy in Chile*. What is this thing? Sometimes he describes it as *like AUI*, other times he thinks of it as *like Mauna Kea Support Services*. In any case, it is meant to raise funds for astronomy in Chile by a combination of corporate donations and a tax on observatories coming to Chile (he mused as how even a 2 or 3 percent tax on the value of ALMA equipment coming to Chile would handsomely fund Chilean astronomy).