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DETECTION OF AN ULTRAVIOLET CONTINUUM IN T Lyn

T Lyn is an N-type carbon star classified as a Mira variable with a period of about 420 days and a range 9.0<V<13.3. On a 75 minute exposure, low-dispersion Kodak IIIa-J objective-prism plate, taken with our Burrell Schmidt telescope on 1 Feb. 1984, this star, which was near maximum light, shows a heavily exposed continuum sharply tapering off towards a wavelength of about 4000 Å, below which a faint, flat featureless ultraviolet continuum persists down to the blue spectral cut-off at about 3300 Å. Inspection of the Palomar Observatory Sky Survey print shows that this ultraviolet tail can not be caused by an overlapping spectrum. It could arise in a hot, blue companion (U ∿16 mag) or in T Lyn itself as proposed in the similar case of NQ Gem (Ap.J. 163, 309, 1971). Additional observations are obviously needed to define the source of this ultraviolet continuum. Observations with the IUE satellite would be ideal but would, unfortunately, require very long exposure times.

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