#### SHOCKED MOLECULAR HYDROGEN IN THE 3C 326 RADIO GALAXY SYSTEM

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#### ABSTRACT

The *Spitzer* spectrum of the giant FR II radio galaxy 3C 326 is dominated by very strong molecular hydrogen emission lines on a faint IR continuum. The  $H_2$  emission originates in the northern component of a double-galaxy system associated with 3C 326. The integrated luminosity in  $H_2$  pure rotational lines is  $8.0 \times 10^{41}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup>, which corresponds to 17% of the  $8-70~\mu m$  luminosity of the galaxy. A wide range of temperatures (125-1000~K) is measured from the  $H_2~0-0~S(0)-S(7)$  transitions, leading to a *warm*  $H_2$  mass of  $1.1 \times 10^9~M_{\odot}$ . Low-excitation ionic forbidden emission lines are consistent with an optical LINER classification for the active nucleus, which is *not* luminous enough to power the observed  $H_2$  emission. The  $H_2$  could be shock heated by the radio jets, but there is no direct indication of this. More likely, the  $H_2$  is shock heated in a tidal accretion flow induced by interaction with the southern companion galaxy. The latter scenario is supported by an irregular morphology, a tidal bridge, and a possible tidal tail imaged with IRAC at  $3-9~\mu m$ . Unlike ultraluminous infrared galaxies, which in some cases exhibit  $H_2$  line luminosities of comparable strength, 3C 326 shows little star formation activity ( $\sim 0.1~M_{\odot}~yr^{-1}$ ). This may represent an important stage in galaxy evolution. Starburst activity and efficient accretion onto the central supermassive black hole may be delayed until the shock-heated  $H_2$  can kinematically settle and cool.

Subject headings: galaxies: active — galaxies: jets — infrared: galaxies

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recent *Spitzer* and *Infrared Space Observatory (ISO)* observations have revealed a new class of extremely luminous molecular hydrogen emission galaxies (MOHEGs) with  $L({\rm H_2}) = 10^{40} - 10^{43}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup> in pure rotational molecular hydrogen emission lines, but relatively weak total IR emission,  $L({\rm H_2})/L_{\rm IR} > 10^{-3}$ . In comparison, normal star-forming galaxies in the *Spitzer* Infrared Nearby Galaxies Survey of the local universe have  $L({\rm H_2})/L_{\rm IR} \sim 6 \times 10^{-4}$  (Roussel et al. 2007).

Appleton et al. (2006) discovered  $H_2$  emission extending over 50" in the giant intergalactic X-ray shock front in the Stephan's Quintet compact group. The estimated  $H_2$  luminosity from the whole shock is in excess of  $10^{41}$  erg s $^{-1}$ . Nearly 30% of the IR luminosity is in  $H_2$  lines, while the rest is emitted by  $\sim$ 40 K dust in the far-IR (Xu et al. 2003). The power in the  $H_2$  lines compared with the dust continuum is several orders of magnitude larger than that seen in photodissociation regions (PDRs). The  $H_2$  emission lines are very broad (870 km s $^{-1}$ ), suggesting turbulent motions inside the shock front. The  $H_2$  emission may be powered by nondissociative shocks in dense clumps or filaments inside the shock front.

Egami et al. (2006) find extremely luminous  $L({\rm H_2})=2\times 10^{43}~{\rm erg~s^{-1}}$  emission from  $\sim 10^{10}\,M_{\odot}$  of warm  ${\rm H_2}$  in the brightest galaxy of the high-luminosity X-ray cluster Zw 3146. This is accompanied by high-luminosity dust emission powered by starburst activity. Lower luminosity rovibrational  ${\rm H_2}$  emission is similarly seen in several low-redshift galaxy clusters (Donahue et al. 2000; Hatch et al. 2005; Johnstone et al. 2007). The source of excited  ${\rm H_2}$  in galaxy clusters is an unsolved mystery; cooling flows, jet shocks, and X-ray heating by active galactic nuclei (AGNs) have all been considered.

Molecular hydrogen emission is often seen in interacting galaxies and ultraluminous infrared galaxies (ULIRGs), but  $L({\rm H_2})/L_{\rm IR}$  is typically  $\ll 10^{-3}$  (Haas et al. 2005; Higdon et al. 2006). The late-stage merger/LIRG NGC 6240 has atypically luminous emission from  $1.6 \times 10^9 \, M_\odot$  of warm  ${\rm H_2}$ , accompanied by a prodigious star formation rate (SFR) of  $\sim 120 \, M_\odot$  yr<sup>-1</sup> (Lutz et al. 2003; Netzer et al. 2005; Max et al. 2005; Armus et al. 2006). The overlap region between the Antennae colliding galaxies also shows unusually strong  ${\rm H_2}$  emission, with  $L({\rm H_2})/L_{\rm IR} \sim 1 \times 10^{-3}$ , possibly indicating a prestarburst shock (Haas et al. 2005).

We present the remarkable  $\rm H_2$  emission spectrum of the FR II radio galaxy 3C 326, observed with the *Spitzer Space Telescope*. This is part of a large survey of 52 FR II radio galaxies from the 3CRR catalog (Ogle et al. 2006), and another survey of 21 FR I radio galaxies (Ogle et al. 2007). So far, we have found 5 FR IIs (10%) and 4 FR Is (19%) with strong  $\rm H_2$  emission (P. Ogle et al. 2007, in preparation). Of the galaxies in our sample, 3C 326 has the largest  $\rm H_2$  emission line equivalent widths. The weak mid-IR continuum of 3C 326 indicates the presence of a radiatively inefficient AGN, in spite of its large radio power and the enormous size of its radio lobes.

## 2. RADIO GALAXY IDENTIFICATION

The radio source 3C 326 is one of the largest known (Willis & Strom 1978), with an angular size of 19.5' (1.9 Mpc; we assume a cosmology with  $H_0 = 70 \, \mathrm{km \, s^{-1} \, Mpc^{-1}}$ ,  $\Omega_m = 0.3$ , and  $\Omega_{\Lambda} = 0.3$ 0.7). The pair of galaxies 3C 326 N and 3C 326 S are both at a redshift of  $z = 0.089 \pm 0.001$  and have a projected separation of 24.9" (41 kpc). There is some confusion concerning which of the two galaxies hosts the AGN that produced the Mpc-scale radio lobes. Both galaxies have unresolved (<3") radio sources coincident with their nuclei, with  $S_{\nu}(8 \text{ GHz}) = 1.5 \text{ and } 6.5 \text{ mJy, re-}$ spectively (Rawlings et al. 1990). While the southern radio source is brighter, both sources are consistent with typical FR II radio galaxy cores. The galaxy 3C 326 N has a LINER-like optical emission line spectrum (strong  $[O \Pi]$ ,  $H\alpha$ ,  $[S \Pi]$ , and weak  $[O \Pi]$ ), while 3C 326 S has no detected emission lines (Rawlings et al. 1990; Simpson et al. 1996). Also, the K-band magnitude and corresponding stellar mass of 3C 326 N is more typical of FR II radio galaxy

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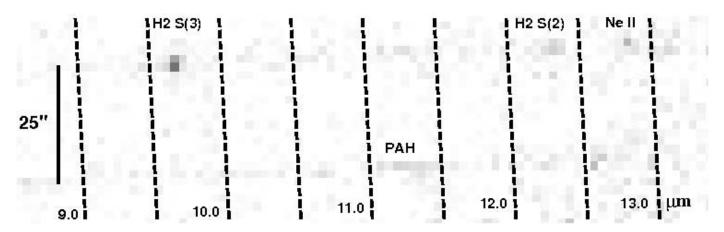


Fig. 1.— Spitzer IRS SL1  $8.5-13.4~\mu m$  (rest) two-dimensional spectra of 3C 326 N (top) and 3C 326 S (bottom). The bright  $H_2$  S(3)  $9.66~\mu m$  emission line in 3C 326 N is spatially and spectrally unresolved. The  $H_2$  S(2) and Ne II lines are also seen. The southern galaxy was serendipitously placed precisely on the SL slit (P.A. =  $178^{\circ}$ ). Its 11.3  $~\mu m$  PAH emission feature is indicated.

hosts (Rawlings et al. 1990). We therefore targeted 3C 326 N with the *Spitzer* IRS.

## 3. OBSERVATIONS

## 3.1. Spitzer IRS

The radio galaxy 3C 326 N was observed with the *Spitzer* IRS (Houck et al. 2004), covering the wavelength range  $5-35~\mu m$ . The companion galaxy 3C 326 S was observed on one nod of the Short-Low (SL) slits because of a fortuitous slit P.A. (Fig. 1). The slit widths in the low-resolution modules Short-Low 2 (SL2), Short-Low 1 (SL1), Long-Low 2 (LL2), and Long-Low 1 (LL1) are 3.6'', 3.7'', 10.5'', and 10.7'', respectively. The SL and LL spectral resolutions range from 60-130. The exposure times were 240 s in each spectral order except LL2 (480 s).

Our data reductions began from the S15.3.0 pipeline-processed Basic Calibrated Data (BCDs). Off-slit observations were subtracted to remove background light. The two-dimensional spectra were cleaned using IRSCLEAN, version 1.8, to median filter bad pixels. Spectra were extracted using SPICE, version 1.4, within tapered regions matching the *Spitzer* point spread function (SL2: 7.2" at 6  $\mu$ m, SL1: 14.4" at 12  $\mu$ m, LL2: 21.7" at 16  $\mu$ m, LL1: 36.6" at 27  $\mu$ m). The second LL2 nod was considerably noisier than the first, so we discarded these data. Optimal extraction (which assumes a point-source spatial profile) yielded significant gains in signal-to-noise ratio for both galaxies.

At the redshift of 3C 326, 1.0" corresponds to 1.7 kpc. The SL and LL slit widths correspond to 6.2 kpc and 18 kpc, respectively, and are considerably smaller than the optical extents of the two galaxies. However, the continuum level is well-matched across orders, and the emission lines and dust features do not appear to be spatially extended along the slit for either galaxy (Figs. 1–3). The continuum and emission line fluxes from the optimally extracted spectra also agree well with the regular extractions, indicating that the galaxies are (excepting the stellar component at short wavelengths) mostly unresolved by *Spitzer* IRS, and that aperture effects are unimportant for studying the dust and gas emission.

#### 3.2. The Mid-IR Spectra

The spectrum of 3C 326 N is dominated by pure rotational emission lines from molecular hydrogen (Fig. 2 and Table 1). We detect the full series of emission lines from  $H_2$  0–0 S(0)–S(7). Forbidden emission lines from the low to moderate ionization

species Fe II, S IV, Ne II, S III, and O IV are also observed (Table 2). Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) emission features are seen at 6.7, 7.7, 10.7, 11.3, 13.6, and 17  $\mu$ m (Table 3). We consider the PAHs at 6.7, 7.7, 10.7, 15.9, and 18.9  $\mu$ m, and the Fe II, S IV, and S III lines to be marginal (<3  $\sigma$ ) detections.

We model the 3C 326 N spectrum using the  $\chi^2$  fitting routine PAHFIT (Smith et al. 2007). Extinction is not included in the model, since it does not improve the fit. Emission lines are fit by Gaussians, and PAH features are fit by Drude profiles (Tables 1–3). None of the emission lines are resolved, all with FWHM < 2300–5000 km s<sup>-1</sup>. The 4.8–8  $\mu$ m continuum is dominated by galaxian starlight. An excess over the stellar component in the 8–24  $\mu$ m region is fit by thermal emission from warm (90–300 K) dust, with integrated flux  $F_{8-24}=(9.0\pm0.9)\times10^{-14}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup> cm<sup>-2</sup> and luminosity  $L_{8-24}=(1.8\pm0.2)\times10^{42}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup>. The companion galaxy 3C 326 S shows no H<sub>2</sub> emission; the

The companion galaxy 3C 326 S shows no  $H_2$  emission; the 3  $\sigma$  upper limit to the  $H_2$  S(3) line flux is  $1.2 \times 10^{-15}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup> cm<sup>-2</sup> [ $L(H_2) < 2.4 \times 10^{40}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup>]. No ionic forbidden emission lines are detected, which is consistent with the lack of optical emission

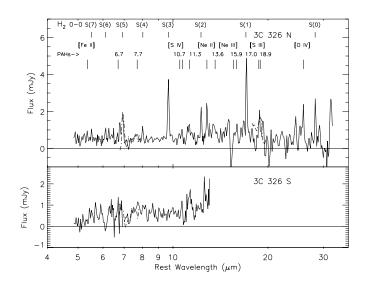


Fig. 2.—*Top: Spitzer* IRS spectrum of 3C 326 N. *Dashed lines*: SL3 and LL3 orders. Extremely strong  $H_2$  emission lines of high equivalent width dominate the spectrum. Weak PAH features indicate a very low level of star formation in spite of the large amount of  $H_2$ . Forbidden ionic emission line ratios are consistent with a weak LINER AGN. *Bottom*: PAH emission detected in 3C 326 S, but no  $H_2$  or ionic forbidden lines.

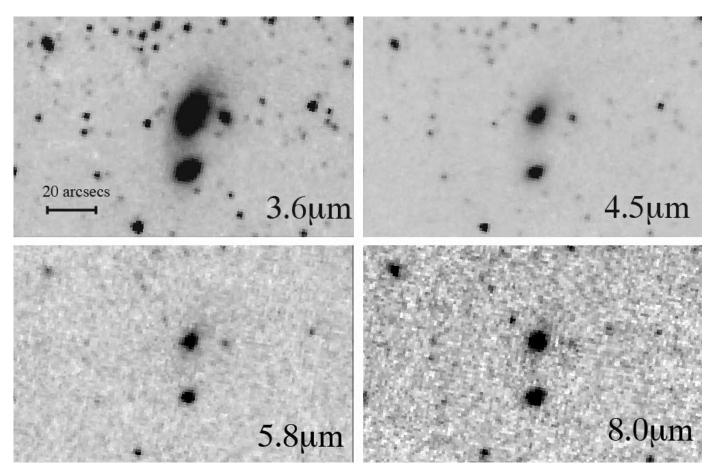


Fig. 3.— Spitzer IRAC 3.6, 4.5, 5.8, and 8.0  $\mu$ m images of 3C 326. North is at the top, east to the left. The first two bands are dominated by stellar emission, while the second two have contributions from dust and H<sub>2</sub>. The galaxies 3C 326 N and 3C 326 S are the brightest two sources in these images. A third source at P.A. = 268° and a fourth 4.3" away from 3C 326 N at P.A. =  $111^{\circ}$  (seen protruding from the left of the galaxy core in the 4.5  $\mu$ m image) appear to be unrelated galaxies seen in projection (see § 3.3). Note the apparent tidal bridge between 3C 326 N and S and a possible tidal tail to the NW in the 3.6 and 4.5  $\mu$ m images, evidence of an ongoing galaxy collision. The galaxy cores are barely resolved at 5.8  $\mu$ m, and 3C 326 S is nearly as bright as 3C 326 N at 8.0  $\mu$ m.

lines and indicates an inactive nucleus. A spike in the spectrum at  $\sim\!\!12~\mu\mathrm{m}$  does not match any known emission lines and may result from a hot pixel. The 7.7 and 11.3  $\mu\mathrm{m}$  PAH features are 2–3 times as strong in 3C 326 S compared to 3C 326 N (Table 3), and the mean 9–10  $\mu\mathrm{m}$  continuum flux density (0.62  $\pm$  0.04 mJy) is 20% brighter.

#### 3.3. Spitzer IRAC and MIPS

We retrieved the IRAC (Fazio et al. 2004) 3.6, 4.5, 5.8, and 8.0  $\mu$ m S14.0.0-processed images from the *Spitzer* archive (program ID 03418, PI M. Birkinshaw) to further constrain the spatial distribution of the stellar, dust, and molecular gas components

(Figs. 3 and 4). A 3  $\sigma$  clipped average of the dither positions, excluding frames affected by a bright star at the edge of the field, was used to subtract the background light, and frames were combined using the *Spitzer* Science Center MOPEX-MOSAIC software. The 3.6 and 4.5  $\mu$ m bands measure the stellar continuum. The 5.8  $\mu$ m band contains the redshifted H<sub>2</sub> S(5)-S(7) lines and 6.7  $\mu$ m PAH feature. The 8.0  $\mu$ m band contains the redshifted H<sub>2</sub> S(3)-S(4) lines and 7.7  $\mu$ m PAH feature. Both of the latter two bands also contain thermal continuum emission from warm dust.

The irregular morphology of 3C 326 N in the IRAC images suggests an ongoing interaction or merger with 3C 326 S (24.9'' at P.A. =  $177^{\circ}$ ), a relatively compact elliptical galaxy. The isophotes

TABLE 1  $H_2$  0–0 S(J) Emission Lines

Parameter	S(0)	S(1)	S(2)	S(3)	S(4)	S(5)	S(6)	S(7)
$\lambda \; (\mu \text{m, rest})$	28.22	17.03	12.28	9.66	8.03	6.91	6.11	5.51
Flux <sup>a</sup>	0.24(0.03)	0.58(0.05)	0.39(0.04)	1.18(0.04)	0.28(0.06)	0.86(0.15)	0.24(0.08)	0.28(0.08)
EW <sup>b</sup>	1.9(0.6)	1.3(0.2)	0.41(0.08)	0.80(0.08)	0.14(0.03)	0.34(0.10)	0.074(0.025)	0.066(0.022)
Luminosity <sup>c</sup>	0.48	1.1	0.77	2.34	0.55	1.7	0.48	0.55
$N/g^{\mathrm{d}}$	9.2E18	2.8E17	3.8E16	6.9E15	1.3E15	4.4E14	1.5E14	2.7E13

a Flux  $(10^{-14} \text{ erg s}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-2})$ .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> Equivalent width ( $\mu$ m, rest).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>c</sup> Luminosity (10<sup>41</sup> erg s<sup>-1</sup>) at a luminosity distance of 407 Mpc.

d Column density (cm<sup>-2</sup>) of upper level divided by its statistical weight, assuming a  $3.7'' \times 3.7''$  source.

TABLE 2	
FORBIDDEN EMISSION	Lines

Parameter	[Fe п]	[S IV]	[Ne II]	[S III]	[O IV]
λ (μm, rest)	5.34	10.51	12.81	18.71	25.89
Flux <sup>a</sup>	0.20(0.08)	0.08(0.04)	0.40(0.04)	0.14(0.07)	0.25(0.03)
Flux/[Ne II]	0.5(0.2)	0.2(0.1)	1.0	0.4(0.2)	0.6(0.1)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Flux  $(10^{-14} \text{ erg s}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-2})$ .

of the two galaxies merge, and they appear to be connected by a tidal bridge. There is a possible tidal tail extending from the NW quadrant at P.A. =  $290^{\circ}-334^{\circ}$ . Two other sources, one 4.3'' away from the center of 3C 326 N at P.A. =  $111^{\circ}$  and one 15.9'' away at P.A. =  $268^{\circ}$ , appear to be unrelated background galaxies seen in projection, based on their morphologies, red colors, and small angular diameters in archival Sloan Digital Sky Survey images.<sup>5</sup>

We also obtained 24, 70, and 160  $\mu$ m MIPS (Rieke et al. 2004) imaging data from the *Spitzer* archive for 3C 326 (Fig. 5). Individual BCD frames from the S14.4 pipeline were processed with the MOPEX-MOSAIC software to generate final images. Aperture photometry was performed on both 3C 326 N and 3C 326 S, and point-source aperture corrections were applied to derive the fluxes (Table 4 and Fig. 6). Both galaxies are detected at 24 and 70  $\mu$ m, but not at 160  $\mu$ m. We measure an rms noise of 0.4 MJy sr<sup>-1</sup> and 3  $\sigma$  flux upper limits of 34 mJy at 160  $\mu$ m. This is consistent with a nondetection at 870  $\mu$ m (Quillen et al. 2003), within a 23" beam centered on 3C 326 S.

The companion 3C 326 S is twice as bright as 3C 326 N at 24  $\mu$ m, while 3C 326 N is 40% brighter at 70  $\mu$ m. A third source is seen in the 70  $\mu$ m image at the location where the tidal bridge in the IRAC 3.6  $\mu$ m image connects to 3C 326 N (Fig. 5 and Table 4). It is not detected in the MIPS 24  $\mu$ m band, nor in any of the IRAC bands. If it is truly associated with 3C 326, then it may indicate cool dust in the tidal bridge. Unfortunately, none of the IRS slits covered this feature, so we do not know if there is any associated H<sub>2</sub> emission.

The spectral energy distributions (SEDs) of 3C 326 N and S are similar, but do show interesting differences (Fig. 6). Both are dominated by stellar emission at frequencies >4 × 10<sup>13</sup> Hz (wavelengths <8  $\mu$ m), which is consistent with our model of the IRS spectrum of 3C 326 N. Dust emission contributes most of the flux at  $\sim$ 1 × 10<sup>12</sup>–4 × 10<sup>13</sup> Hz, and synchrotron emission from

TABLE 3
Aromatic Emission Features (PAHs)

λ	Flux <sup>a</sup>			
(μm)	3C 326 N	3C 326 S		
6.7	1.13 (0.48)			
7.7	0.53 (0.26)	1.61 (0.42)		
10.7	0.22 (.09)			
11.3	0.64 (0.13)	1.19 (0.20)		
13.6	0.98 (0.18)			
15.9	0.21 (0.11)			
17.0	1.15 (0.27)			
18.9	0.33 (0.18)			

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Flux  $(10^{-14} \text{ erg s}^{-1} \text{ cm}^{-2})$ .

the radio cores is seen at 3-10 GHz. The ratio  $L(70~\mu\text{m})/L(24~\mu\text{m})$  is greater in 3C 326 N than in 3C 326 S (Table 4), indicating relatively more cool dust emission and relatively less warm dust emission

We estimate far-IR continuum luminosities by interpolating the 24 and 70  $\mu \rm m$  photometric points with a power law. This yields  $L_{24-70}=(3.0\pm0.4)\times10^{42}$  erg s $^{-1}$  and  $(3.3\pm1.8)\times10^{42}$  erg s $^{-1}$ , respectively, for 3C 326 N and 3C 326 S. Adding together the MIR 8–24  $\mu \rm m$  and FIR 24–70  $\mu \rm m$  emission, the 8–70  $\mu \rm m$  luminosity of 3C 326 N is  $L_{8-70}=(4.8\pm0.5)\times10^{42}$  erg s $^{-1}$  [(1.2  $\pm0.1)\times10^9$   $L_{\odot}$ ]. Upper and lower bounds to the FIR luminosity at longer wavelengths of  $L_{70-1000}=(0.3-1.7)\times10^{43}$  erg s $^{-1}$  are estimated for each galaxy by assuming blackbody emission that peaks at either 70 or 160  $\mu \rm m$  (Fig. 6). The total 8–1000  $\mu \rm m$  IR luminosity of 3C 326 N therefore lies in the range  $L_{\rm IR}=(0.8-2.2)\times10^{43}$  erg s $^{-1}$  [(2–6) $\times10^9$   $L_{\odot}$ ].

## 4. H<sub>2</sub> EMISSION

The galaxy 3C 326 N has  $H_2$  pure rotational lines of extraordinary luminosity and equivalent width (Fig. 2 and Table 1). The  $H_2$  S(3) line has a luminosity of  $(2.34 \pm 0.08) \times 10^{41}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup> and an equivalent width of  $0.80 \pm 0.08~\mu m$ . The integrated



Fig. 4.—Spitzer IRAC three-color image of 3C 326: blue, 3.6  $\mu$ m; green, 4.5  $\mu$ m; red, 5.8  $\mu$ m. Foreground stars and starlight-dominated galaxies appear blue-green, while dust or H<sub>2</sub> emission appears red. The brightest galaxy and AGN host 3C 326 N has an irregular morphology because of its interaction with 3C 326 S. Note the possible tidal tail extending to the NW.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> see http://www.sdss.org/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Obtained from http://ssc.spitzer.caltech.edu.

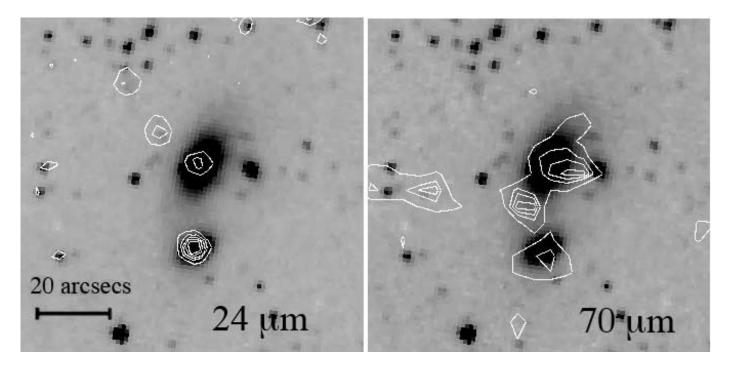


Fig. 5.—Left: Spitzer MIPS 24  $\mu$ m flux contours overlaid on the IRAC 3.6  $\mu$ m image of 3C 326. North is at the top, east to the left. The contour levels are 0.3, 0.4, 0.5, and 0.6 MJy sr<sup>-1</sup> Right: MIPS 70  $\mu$ m contours overlaid on the 3.6  $\mu$ m image. The contour levels are 0.45, 0.65, 0.75, and 0.85 MJy sr<sup>-1</sup>. 3C 326 S is brighter at 24  $\mu$ m, while 3C 326 N is brighter at 70  $\mu$ m. A third 70  $\mu$ m source appears between the two galaxies, but not in the IRAC image. It may be cool dust emission associated with the tidal bridge, or an unrelated background source.

S(0)-S(7) line luminosity is  $L({\rm H_2})=(8.0\pm0.4)\times10^{41}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup>. This is  $17\%\pm2\%$  of the measured  $8-70~\mu{\rm m}$  luminosity and 4%-10% of the estimated  $8-1000~\mu{\rm m}$  luminosity, making it the most extreme H<sub>2</sub>-emitting galaxy seen so far by *Spitzer* (Table 6). Unlike the giant, extended, intergalactic shock in Stephan's Quintet, the H<sub>2</sub> emission here is unresolved and contained within the central region of 3C 326 N.

We estimate the upper level column densities (N/g) for each observed  $H_2$  transition, divided by the statistical weights (Fig. 7 and Table 1), assuming that the  $H_2$  source just fits inside the SL slit (3.7"). The column density distribution is fit by a minimum of three temperature components with T=125,400, and  $1000~\rm K$  (Table 5). The fit is not unique, but rather serves to demonstrate the large range of temperatures of the  $H_2$  emission regions. The total column density of  $125~\rm K$   $H_2$  averaged over the SL slit is  $1.8 \times 10^{21}~\rm cm^{-2}$ .

The ratio of ortho (odd angular momentum quantum number J) to para (even J)  $H_2$  depends on the gas temperature and thermal history. Warm  $H_2$  in thermal equilibrium at a temperature of 125 K should have ortho/para = 2.1, which is consistent with our model fit. The ratio of ortho/para  $H_2$  in the hot (400 K and 1000 K) components is consistent with the standard value of 3.0 for gas

in thermal equilibrium at T > 250 K (Wilgenbus et al. 2000; Neufeld et al. 2006).

The masses of warm and hot molecular gas sum to  $1.1 \times 10^9~M_\odot$  (Table 6). This is comparable to the warm  $\rm H_2$  mass in NGC 6240 (Lutz et al. 2003; Armus et al. 2006) and to the *total* molecular gas mass of the Milky Way ( $\sim 2 \times 10^9~M_\odot$ ). No published CO observations of 3C 326 are available, so we have no knowledge of the mass of cold  $\rm H_2$ ; although by analogy with galaxies like NGC 6240, the cold component could be even larger than the warm and hot components. In thermodynamic equilibrium, the  $\rm H_2$  component densities must exceed the critical densities of the observed rotational transitions (Le Bourlot et al. 1999). This yields maximum filling factors ranging from  $f_{\rm max} = 2 \times 10^{-3}$  for the 125 K component to  $f_{\rm max} = 1 \times 10^{-9}$  for the 1000 K component within the central 6.2 kpc diameter sphere (Table 5).

## 5. FORBIDDEN EMISSION LINES AND AGN ACTIVITY

The mid-IR forbidden emission lines from several ions (Table 2) can be used to distinguish between starburst and AGN activity. In particular, line flux ratios of [O  $\mbox{\sc iv}]/[\mbox{\sc Ne}\mbox{\sc ii}]=0.6\pm0.1$  and [S  $\mbox{\sc iv}]/[\mbox{\sc Ne}\mbox{\sc ii}]=0.2\pm0.1$  in 3C 326 are characteristic of a

TABLE 4 MIPS 24, 70, and 160  $\mu m$  Photometry

Source	$F_{\nu}$ (24 $\mu$ m) <sup>a</sup>	$F_{\nu}$ (70 $\mu$ m) <sup>b</sup>	$F_{\nu}(160 \ \mu {\rm m})^{\rm c}$	$L(24 \mu m)^d$	L(70 μm)	L(70)/L(24)
3C 326 N	$0.52\pm0.07$	$6.12 \pm 0.65$	<34	$1.3 \pm 0.2$	$5.2 \pm 0.6$	$4.0 \pm 0.8$
3C 326 S	$1.05\pm0.12$	$4.33 \pm 0.60$	<34	$2.6 \pm 0.3$	$3.7 \pm 0.5$	$1.4\pm0.3$
Bridge <sup>e</sup>		$4.40\pm0.60$			$3.8\pm0.5$	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Flux density (mJy) in the 24  $\mu$ m band, measured in a 4.9" radius aperture and multiplied by an aperture correction of 2.0.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> Flux density (mJy) in the 70 μm band, measured in a 9.84" radius aperture and multiplied by an aperture correction of 1.5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>c</sup> The 3  $\sigma$  upper limit to the 160  $\mu$ m flux density (mJy), measured in a 20" radius aperture.

d Luminosity  $\nu L_{\nu}(10^{42} \text{ erg s}^{-1})$ , at a luminosity distance of 407 Mpc.

e This source (only in the MIPS 70  $\mu$ m image) is found at roughly the location where the tidal bridge appears to connect to 3C 326 N (Fig. 5).

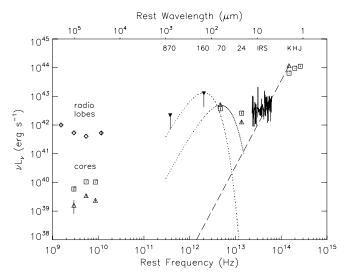


Fig. 6.—Spectral energy distributions of 3C 326 N (open triangles and solid line), 3C 326 S (squares), and 3C 326 radio lobes (diamonds). MIPS 24 and 70  $\mu m$  points indicate warm and cold dust components. MIPS 160  $\mu m$  and ground-based 870  $\mu m$  (Quillen et al. 2003) 3  $\sigma$  upper limits (filled inverted triangles) apply to both galaxies individually. J-, H-, and K-band near-IR photometry are by Lilly & Longair (1984). The radio core fluxes and the K-band photometry of 3C 326 N are from Rawlings et al. (1990). Radio lobe data are from Willis & Strom (1978) and the NASA/IPAC Extragalactic Database. The dashed line represents the Rayleigh-Jeans tail of starlight connecting the K-band photometry to the IRS spectrum of 3C 326 N. The dotted lines are 25 and 58 K blackbodies, representing upper and lower limits to the  $70-1000~\mu m$  emission.

LINER AGN (Spinoglio & Malkan 1992; Sturm et al. 2006). Seyfert galaxies have relatively stronger [O IV] and [S IV] than this, while starburst galaxies are relatively weaker in these two lines. Consequently, little of the forbidden line emission comes from star formation activity. A LINER classification for 3C 326 is also

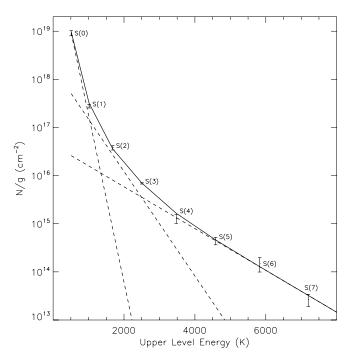


Fig. 7.— $H_2$  excitation diagram for 3C 326 N. Upper level column densities normalized by their statistical weights are plotted as a function of upper level energy ( $E_u/k_B$ ) for each pure rotational transition. The best-fitting model (*solid line*) has three temperature components (*dashed lines*): 125, 400, and 1000 K. The ortho/para ratios are set at the respective thermal equilibrium values (Table 5). Note that the *y*-intercept for each model component gives the average  $H_2$  ground-state column density integrated over the SL slit.

TABLE 5  $H_2$  Model Parameters

<i>T</i> (K)	<i>M</i> (H <sub>2</sub> ) <sup>a</sup>	Ortho/Para	$n_{ m crit}^{\ \ b}$	$f_{\rm max}^{}$
125	1.1E9	2.1	5.3E2	1.5E-3
400	1.1E7	3.0	1.1E4	7.0E - 7
1000	6.4E5	3.0	4.4E5	1.0E-9

- <sup>a</sup> H<sub>2</sub> mass  $(M_{\odot})$ .
- <sup>b</sup> Critical density (cm<sup>-3</sup>).
- <sup>c</sup> Maximum filling factor under LTE conditions.

consistent with the optical line ratio [O III]  $\lambda 5007/[O II] \lambda 3727 = 0.30$  (Simpson et al. 1996).

Spitzer observations give an upper limit to the IR luminosity of the AGN, since there is a significant contribution from the host galaxy. The fiducial 15  $\mu$ m (rest) continuum flux is 0.87  $\pm$  0.09 mJy, somewhat greater than the upper limit measured by Ogle et al. (2006). (Our measurement accuracy has improved by throwing out the noisy LL2 nod and using optimal extraction.) The corresponding luminosity is  $\nu L(15 \mu m) = (3.4 \pm 0.4) \times 10^{42} \text{ erg s}^{-1}$ , and its ratio to the radio lobe luminosity is only  $\nu L(15 \mu m)$  $\nu L(178 \text{ MHz}) = 4.4$ . We confirm that this powerful radio galaxy contains an AGN with relatively low accretion power. In comparison, we find from archival Spitzer IRS observations that the LINER/FR I radio galaxy M 87 is one-tenth as bright, with  $\nu L(15 \ \mu m) = (3.3 \pm 0.1) \times 10^{41} \ erg \ s^{-1}$ , and has a similar ratio of  $\nu L(15 \mu m)/\nu L(178 \text{ MHz}) = 3.9$ . It has been argued that lowpower radio galaxies such as M87 are fueled by radiatively inefficient accretion (Reynolds et al. 1996).

X-ray heating has been proposed as a possible mechanism to produce  $\rm H_2$  emission in active galaxies (Krolik & Lepp 1989; Draine & Woods 1990; Rigopoulou et al. 2002). Unfortunately, there are no published X-ray observations of 3C 326 N. However, Hardcastle et al. (2006) find a ~1:1 correlation between 15  $\mu$ m continuum emission and accretion-powered 2–10 keV X-ray luminosity for z < 0.5 radio galaxies. If this correlation holds true for 3C 326 N, and the  $\rm H_2$  were powered by X-rays, then the observed ratio of  $L(\rm H_2)/L(15~\mu m) = 0.23 \pm 0.03$  would require an implausibly high conversion of X-rays to  $\rm H_2$  emission. *Chandra* X-ray observations are necessary to directly confirm this, and will also be useful for measuring the high-energy SED of the AGN to test accretion models.

# 6. AROMATIC FEATURE EMISSION AND STAR FORMATION

We detect several aromatic (PAH) emission features in the IRS spectrum of 3C 326 N (Fig.2 and Table 3). The 7.7 and 11.3  $\mu$ m PAH luminosities are  $(1.0\pm0.5)\times10^{41}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup> and  $(1.3\pm0.3)\times10^{41}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup>, respectively. The 11.3/7.7 PAH flux ratio is  $1.2\pm0.6$ , to be compared with an average ratio of  $0.3\pm0.1$  for spiral galaxies and AGN host galaxies (Smith et al. 2007; Shi et al. 2007). The total luminosity in detected PAH features is  $L(PAH) = (1.0\pm0.1)\times10^{42}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup> and the ratio  $L(H_2)/L(PAH) = 0.8\pm0.1$ . This ratio is much greater than the typical ratio of  $\sim1\times10^{-2}$  seen in normal star-forming galaxies, where both  $H_2$  and PAHs are thought to be produced in stellar PDRs (Roussel et al. 2007).

PAH emission excited by UV photons from O and B stars roughly correlates with other star formation rate indicators such as  ${\rm H}\alpha$  luminosity and 24  $\mu{\rm m}$  continuum luminosity (Roussel et al. 2001). However, there is a large scatter, with PAH luminosity depending on metallicity and age of the stellar population

TA	ABL	Æ 6
STRONG	$H_2$	EMITTERS

Source	M(cold H <sub>2</sub> ) <sup>a</sup>	M(warm H <sub>2</sub> ) <sup>b</sup>	L(H <sub>2</sub> ) <sup>c</sup>	$L(\mathrm{H_2})/L_{\mathrm{IR}}^{\mathrm{d}}$	References
Zw 3146 BCG	$\sim 1 \times 10^{11}$	$\sim 1 \times 10^{10}$	$2.1\times10^{43}$	0.014	1
NGC 6240	$1.1\times10^{10}$	$1.6 \times 10^{9}$	$4.6 \times 10^{42}$	0.003	2,3
3C 326 N		$1.1 \times 10^{9}$	$8.0 \times 10^{41}$	0.04 - 0.1	
Antennae	$9.6 \times 10^{9}$	$4.9 \times 10^{8}$	$1.7 \times 10^{41}$	0.0009	4,5,6
Stephan's Quintet		$> 3.4 \times 10^7$	$> 8.4 \times 10^{40}$	0.34	7

- <sup>a</sup> Cold H<sub>2</sub> mass derived from CO measurements.
- $^{\mathrm{b}}$  Warm  $\mathrm{H}_{2}$  mass measured from  $\mathit{Spitzer}$  or ISO spectra.
- <sup>c</sup> H<sub>2</sub> luminosity (erg s<sup>-1</sup>).

<sup>d</sup> The IR luminosity is integrated over  $8-1000 \mu m$ .

REFERENCES.—(1) Egami et al. 2006; (2) Lutz et al. 2003; (3) Armus et al. 2006; (4) Haas et al. 2005; (5) Young et al. 1995;

(6) Klaas et al. 1997; (7) Appleton et al. 2006.

(Calzetti et al. 2007). X-ray radiation from an AGN can destroy PAHs (Voit 1991), but should have little effect at large distances or in regions shielded from the nucleus. With these caveats in mind, we estimate the SFR from the luminosity of the 7.7  $\mu$ m PAH feature to be  $(7 \pm 3) \times 10^{-2} \, M_{\odot} \, \text{yr}^{-1}$  for 3C 326 N. The 24  $\mu$ m luminosity measured with MIPS yields a comparable SFR of 0.14  $\pm$  0.02  $M_{\odot} \, \text{yr}^{-1}$ . The similarity of these two estimates indicates that the AGN does not dominate the continuum at this wavelength ( $\lesssim$ 50%). The star formation rate is only 2%–5% of the  $\sim$ 3  $M_{\odot} \, \text{yr}^{-1}$  SFR of the Milky Way.

One remarkable aspect of 3C 326 N (and MOHEGs in general) is the lack of starburst activity in the presence of a large molecular gas mass. The mean surface density of warm  $\rm H_2$  inside the SL slit is  $30\,M_{\odot}\,\rm pc^{-2}$ . In order to suppress star formation in a central thin disk, the total gas surface density must be below the critical density (Kennicutt 1989). An accurate estimate of the critical density in 3C 326 N will require a kinematic study of the molecular gas. A large turbulent velocity dispersion or rotational velocity shear would increase the critical density for star formation. The molecular gas may have not yet even settled into a disk. Efficient star formation and AGN accretion may be suppressed and delayed in 3C 326 N until the molecular gas has kinematically settled and cooled.

The PAH and 24  $\mu$ m luminosities of companion galaxy 3C 326 S yield estimated SFRs of  $0.20 \pm 0.05$  and  $0.26 \pm 0.03~M_{\odot}~\rm{yr}^{-1}$ , respectively. These SFR estimates are within the broad range seen for normal, nonstarburst early type galaxies (Combes et al. 2007). The SFR in 3C 326 S is significantly larger than the SFR in 3C 326 N. Since no H<sub>2</sub> emission lines are detected, it is likely that most of the remaining molecular gas is cold and conducive to star formation. A Hubble Space Telescope image of 3C 326 S in the F702W band shows a dust lane (or nearly edge-on disk) cutting across the core at P.A.  $\sim 105^{\circ}$ , which confirms the presence of a significant dusty ISM (Martel et al. 1999). The galaxy 3C 326 S may be the H<sub>2</sub> donor for 3C 326 N, and may have had a much larger molecular gas component that has been largely stripped by tidal interaction. It would be particularly useful to measure the masses and surface densities of cold CO (and thereby H<sub>2</sub>) in both galaxies to see if they are consistent with the observed SFRs, and to help to understand why the warm H<sub>2</sub> emission is so much stronger in 3C 326 N.

# 7. ENERGETICS AND H<sub>2</sub> HEATING MECHANISMS

In 3C 326 N, the ratio of mid-IR rotational  $H_2$  emission to the 8–70  $\mu$ m IR continuum emission is  $L(H_2)/L_{8-70}=0.17\pm0.02$ . The  $H_2$  pure rotational lines are therefore a major coolant for the warm molecular gas phase of the ISM. The 125 K  $H_2$  component has a thermal energy content of  $\sim$ 4 × 10<sup>52</sup> erg, and the cooling

time from the observed luminosity in  $H_2 S(0) + S(1)$  lines is only  $9 \times 10^3$  yr. It is therefore necessary to continuously inject energy into the molecular gas to maintain the observed temperature. We consider below two possible scenarios for heating the  $H_2$ : (1) shock heating by the inner radio jet and (2) tidally induced inflow or accretion from the companion galaxy 3C 326 S.

## 7.1. Radio Jet Heating Scenario

The radio lobe size and Alfvén speed give an estimated expansion age of  $\sim\!\!2\times10^8$  yr for the Mpc-scale radio source (Willis & Strom 1978). The terminal working surfaces of the radio jets are in intergalactic space, far outside both galaxies. Any jet heating of  $\rm H_2$  must be done locally by the inner jet at a radius of  $\lesssim\!3.1$  kpc. The average jet power is best estimated from the extended radio lobe emission. The minimum energy content in the radio lobes derived from equipartition arguments is  $6.0\times10^{59}$  erg (Willis & Strom 1978). Dividing by the radio source lifetime, we estimate a jet kinetic luminosity of  $9.5\times10^{43}$  erg s $^{-1}$ . We estimate a smaller kinetic luminosity of  $4.8\times10^{43}$  erg s $^{-1}$  if the lobe magnetic fields have subequipartition strength, and the lobe energy is dominated by relativistic particles (Punsly 2006, 2005).

The integrated 10 MHz-10 GHz synchrotron luminosity from the radio lobes is  $4.7 \times 10^{42}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup>,  $\sim 5\%$  of the estimated jet kinetic luminosity. The synchrotron luminosity of the 3C 326 N core is much weaker, at  $3.5 \times 10^{39}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup>. If we assume that the synchrotron luminosity is roughly proportional to the dissipation of jet kinetic energy, then the ratio of core to lobe total luminosity indicates that  $\sim 7 \times 10^{-4}$  of the jet kinetic luminosity, or  $\sim 7 \times$ 10<sup>40</sup> erg s<sup>-1</sup>, is dissipated in 3C 326 N. (For the sake of illustration, this assumes that relativistic beaming is not important in the core. In the likely case that the core emission is beamed, this should be divided by the beaming factor.) This is less than one tenth of the luminosity required to power the observed H<sub>2</sub> emission. Also, jet shocks must be active over a large fraction of the total H<sub>2</sub> mass in the galaxy to be a viable heating mechanism. However, with a large uncertainty in the amount of jet kinetic power dissipated and the unknown spatial configuration of H<sub>2</sub>, this scenario may deserve further consideration. High spatial resolution radio observations are necessary to look for any direct evidence of jet-ISM interaction.

## 7.2. Tidally Induced Inflow

Another, preferred scenario is that 3C 326 N has been disturbed by gravitational interaction with 3C 326 S. The  $\rm H_2$  may have been either stripped from 3C 326 S, or already present in 3C 326 N. Tidal forces from 3C 326 S would then induce the observed distortions in 3C 326 N, in turn giving rise to gravitational torque that drives molecular gas into the galaxy center. The

gravitational energy of the infalling gas is then converted into turbulence and heat via an accretion shock or shocks between subclumps. The simulations of Mihos & Hernquist (1996) show that the greatest gas inflow rates are achieved for coplanar interactions of disk systems  $\sim 2 \times 10^8$  yr after the initial encounter, due to the growth of a central bar over the disk dynamical timescale, but before the final merger. The tidal field of the bar drives the inflow.

The K-band magnitudes of 3C 326 N and S are 12.95 and 13.60, respectively (Lilly & Longair 1984; Rawlings et al. 1990). We estimate stellar bulge masses of  $3.1 \times 10^{11}$  and  $1.6 \times 10^{11}$   $M_{\odot}$ , respectively, using an empirical relation between K-band luminosity and bulge mass (Marconi & Hunt 2003). The  $\sim$ 2: 1 mass ratio qualifies this as a major interaction. The corresponding nuclear supermassive black hole masses (assuming  $M_{\rm BH}/M_{\rm bulge} = 1.5 \times$  $10^{-3}$ ) are  $\sim 5 \times 10^8$  and  $\sim 2 \times 10^8$   $M_{\odot}$ , which may eventually result in a major black hole merger if the two galaxies merge. The isophotes of 3C 326 N are roughly elliptical at a radius of 12.2", with P.A. =  $154^{\circ}$ . At larger radii (12''-16''), the isophotes bend to the south to meet 3C 326 S, perhaps indicating a tidal bridge. The two galaxies have identical radial velocities to within the measurement uncertainties ( $\pm 300 \text{ km s}^{-1}$ ).

The two-body L1 Lagrange point is at  $24/\cos(\theta)$  kpc from the nucleus of 3C 326 N and  $17/\cos(\theta)$  kpc from the nucleus of 3C 326 S, where  $\theta$  is the inclination of the orbital axis. The gravitational potential energy released by  $1.1 \times 10^9 M_{\odot}$  of H<sub>2</sub> falling from L1 to the center of 3C 326 N is  $8.4 \times 10^{57}$  erg. Dividing by the dynamical (free-fall) timescale of  $t_{\rm dyn} = 9.1 \times 10^7$  yr, we obtain an H<sub>2</sub> inflow rate of 12  $M_{\odot}$  yr <sup>-1</sup> and an accretion luminosity of  $2.9 \times 10^{42}$  erg s<sup>-1</sup>. This is sufficient to power the observed H<sub>2</sub> emission at a conversion efficiency of 27%. A massive dark halo will deepen the gravitational potential and allow an even lower conversion efficiency. The near coincidence of the crossing timescale  $2t_{\rm dyn} = 1.8 \times 10^8$  yr and the age of the radio source suggest the intriguing possibility that the radio jet activity is ultimately fueled, at low radiative efficiency, by tidally driven accretion.

Ground-based adaptive-optics imaging of near-IR H<sub>2</sub> rovibrational transitions in 3C 326 N will probe the spatial distribution of hot H<sub>2</sub> and further test the scenario of tidally induced accretion. The proposed H<sub>2</sub> Explorer mission (H2EX; Boulanger & Maillard 2007), sensitive to H<sub>2</sub> emission over a large field of view, could establish the space density of the general MOHEG population and help to determine its importance as a stage in galaxy evolution.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

We have discovered extremely luminous molecular hydrogen pure rotational emission lines from radio galaxy 3C 326 N. The continuum emission is relatively weak, so that the H<sub>2</sub> emission contributes 17% of the  $8-70~\mu\mathrm{m}$  IR luminosity and is a major coolant. We measure a warm molecular gas mass of  $1.1 \times 10^9 M_{\odot}$  at temperatures of 125-1000 K within a 3.1 kpc radius of the galaxy center. The H<sub>2</sub> ortho/para ratios are consistent with thermodynamic equilibrium.

We consider three ways to heat the H<sub>2</sub> to the observed temperatures and produce the extreme H<sub>2</sub> emission line luminosities. The LINER AGN in 3C 326 N is most likely not luminous enough to power the observed H<sub>2</sub> emission via X-ray heating. Jet shock heating could work in principle, but there does not appear to be enough kinetic energy dissipated inside the host galaxy by the jet. We favor the idea that accretion shocks from inflow induced by tidal interaction with 3C 326 S may power the remarkable H<sub>2</sub> emission spectrum.

Weak PAH emission features and thermal dust continuum in 3C 326 N and 3C 326 S indicate very little star formation activity,  $\sim 0.1-0.3 \, M_{\odot} \, \text{yr}^{-1}$ . The weak star formation in 3C 326 N and low accretion luminosity of the AGN are remarkable considering the large amount and high surface density of molecular gas. Similar H<sub>2</sub> emission seen in some ULIRGs is usually accompanied by vigorous starburst or AGN activity. The newly discovered molecular hydrogen emission galaxy (MOHEG) phenomenon may represent an important stage in galaxy evolution. Star formation, as well as accretion onto the central supermassive black hole, may be suppressed by high temperatures, turbulence, or velocity shear in the large central mass of shocked molecular

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