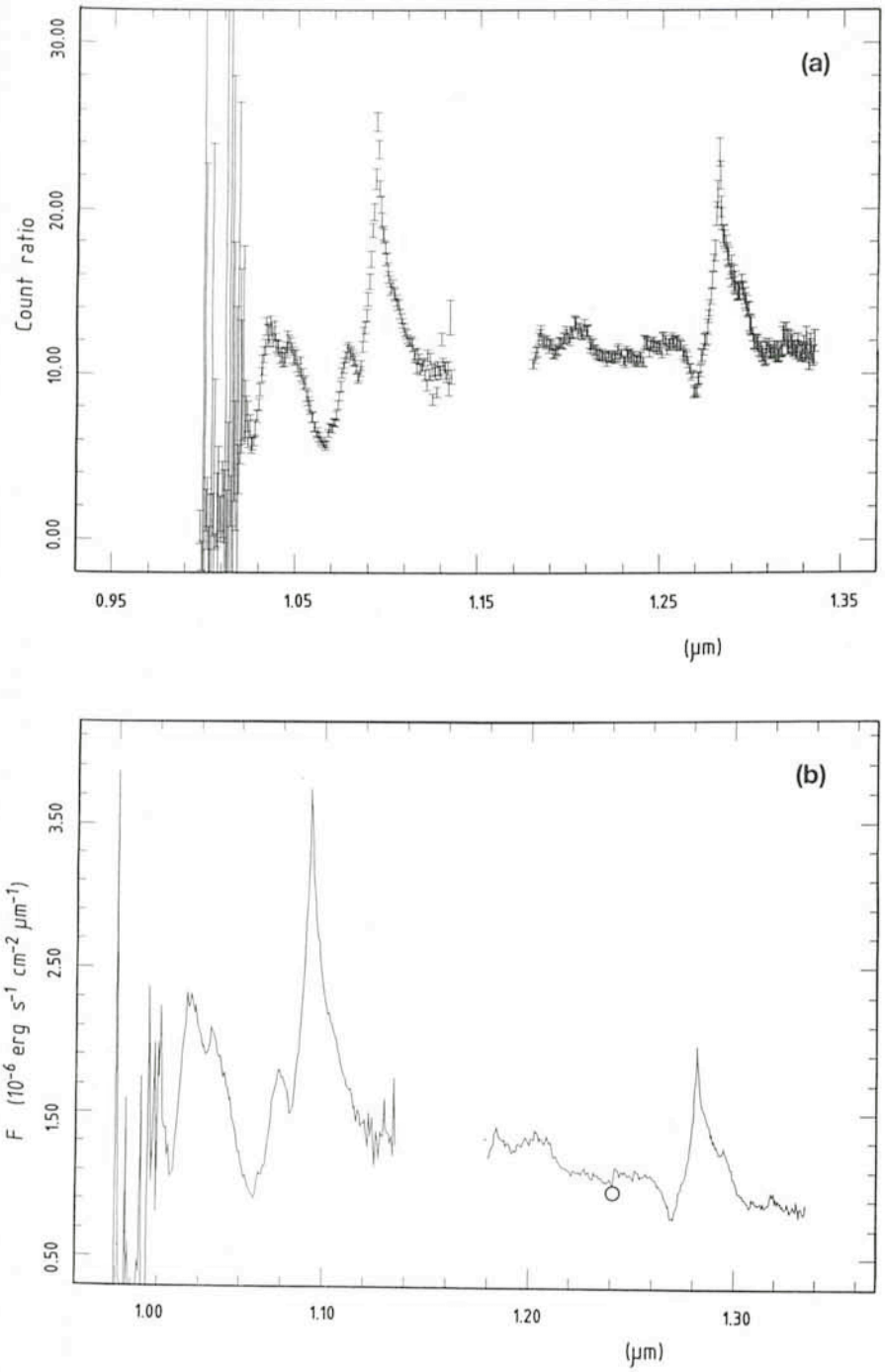

Figure 2: *Spectrum of SN 1987A in the J band observed during the night 29/30 May 1987, reduced with the IRSPEC package in MIDAS. (a) Observed counts with associated errors. (b) Calibrated flux, the circle marks the J band photometric flux, determined independently during the same night.*

are also indebted to T. Le Bertre for providing the SN 1987A data used for testing purposes.

References

1. A. Moorwood, P. Biereichel, G. Finger, J.-L. Lizon, M. Meyer, W. Nees and J. Paureau: 1986, *The Messenger*, No. 44, p. 19.
2. A. Moorwood: 1986, *IRSPEC Operating Manual.*
3. P. Biereichel: 1986, *IRSPEC Software Operating Manual.*

ESO at the IAU General Assembly

The XXth IAU General Assembly will take place in Baltimore, from August 2–11, 1988. Following the previous Assemblies, in Greece (1982) and in India (1985), it is expected that at least 2,000, perhaps even 3,000 astronomers will convene this year to discuss almost any aspect of modern astronomy. The General Assembly therefore also provides an excellent forum for presentation of the organizations connected with this science.

Among other exhibitors, mostly from North America, ESO will mount a small display in a booth at the Assembly. The 16-m Very Large Telescope will be shown by a new model and various aspects of the science and technology at ESO will be illustrated by drawings and photos. Brochures with details about ESO will also be availble for hand-out.

See you at the ESO booth in Baltimore!

ESO Grid Processing Machine

After much testing and several modifications, the prototype of the automatic ESO Grid Processing Machine (see also *The Messenger* **46,** 7, December 1986) is now ready. Its superiority over the Tray Rocker has been confirmed, both in terms of development efficiency and uniformity. It will therefore replace the Tray Rockers at ESO for the processing of large photographic plates. Practical tests will be made later this year at the ESO Schmidt telescope, together with the new Kodak T-max plates. When properly sensitized, these plates appear to reach fainter limiting magnitudes than the IIIa-J emulsion. Thus, it is thought that the combination of the new emulsion with the more efficient development technique may lead to higher detective quantum efficiency. The results of these tests will be announced in a later issue of the *Messenger*. Interested observatories can obtain further information about the Grid Processing Machine from the ESO Information Service (address on last page).