

REPORT BY MR J.A. FERGUSON, FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY, TOURISM, SPORT AND RECREATION DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARTS, SPORT, THE ENVIRONMENT, TOURISM AND TERRITORIES ON THE PRESENTATION OF EXPO 88 REPORTS TO THE BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITIONS

The Australian Ambassador to France, Mr Ted Pocock, led the delegation and presented Australia's report. Ambassador Pocock made a brief statement in response to the Chairman's invitation to report on Expo 88, emphasising the success of the Expo and pointing out that the two reports, that is the one from the Expo Authority and your own report as Commissioner-General, had been circulated and that we would be prepared to answer any questions on them. He expressed regret at the fact that you were unable to be present and drew attention particularly to your personal report covering the official report of your Office. In his opening remarks Ambassador Pocock stressed the important contribution that you, Sir Llew, and Commissioner de Lario had made to the success of the Expo. Sir Llew Edwards then made a very brief intervention referring to the success of the Expo overall, levels of attendance and so on. At the conclusion of our short presentation there were no questions, although one or two delegations expressed their congratulations on the success of the Expo. A number of delegations expressed disappointment privately that you were unable to be present. The Spanish, in reporting briefly on preparations for Seville, made a point of saying how helpful everyone associated with Expo 88 had been when they had visited Australia to gain experience for Seville.

Dr de Lario was not present at the meeting to present his report and it was therefore presented by M. Galopin, who made reference to what he called difficulties allegedly experienced relating mainly to taxes and privileges. He did, however, recognise that all problems raised had been dealt with expeditiously, albeit not always to the participants' satisfaction. He also referred to a lack of support for the Expo by the Commonwealth Government, but made a point of praising your own contribution and help to the participants.

Mr Ted Allan, the Vice President in introducing M. Galopin, made reference to Dr de Lario's report and suggested that it might be profitable if Australia's representatives could get together with some members of the Secretariat to look at lessons that could be learnt from Brisbane's Expo for the future benefit of

all. In our response to Galopin's presentation, Ambassador Pocock said we were attracted by Allan's suggestion and that, while we did not intend to discuss the detail of the report on this occasion, we would be examining it closely and may wish to provide comments for circulation.

In respect of the Commonwealth attitude we simply affirmed that the Commonwealth Government had fully supported the Exposition. There were no questions and no discussion on Dr de Lario's report and indeed, as it had only just been circulated, none of the delegations that we spoke to apart from the obvious ones involved in its preparation had read it or gave any indication that they were particularly interested in its contents.

A number of delegations told us that had the matter come up for discussion they would have supported the Expo Authority and the Commonwealth Government for its handling of matters during the Expo.

In the event, reference to Expo 88 passed without difficulty for us. There is no doubt that the Exposition was recognised as a major success and acceptance that the difficulties experienced by some delegations, although not necessarily resolved to their satisfaction, had nevertheless been dealt with expeditiously by you and your Office and that you had done everything possible to resolve any problems that had arisen. In conclusion, we resolved to pass on to you the best wishes of the Assembly and its regret that you were not present.