

PART 2: OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The EXPO 86 Specialized Periods program was an ambitious undertaking. The resultant program of 150 unique theme-related events succeeded in involving international participants and providing a forum for professionals in the fields of transportation and communications, but its main success was that it lent credibility to the Exposition's commitment to the theme and focused the attention of the media and the public on it, as well as professionals.

A. Development of the Theme

To a significant degree, the credibility of the theme of the Exposition was established by the Specialized Periods program. Both Ambassador Patrick Reid, Commissioner General of EXPO 86 and Ted Allan, Commissioner General for Britain and Chairman of the Steering Committee, have observed that the Specialized Periods program was instrumental in recruiting countries to participate in EXPO 86. The program was a particularly important selling point for major industrialized European countries which, not surprisingly, were the most active participants in the program.

The Transportation and Communications theme was particularly well-suited to the Specialized Periods concept because of the high degree of professional involvement and technological developments in these fields worldwide.

Legacies from the Specialized Periods program include commitments from several event organizers to continue the professional programs that were fostered by the program, e.g. AIRFAIR 86 (the international aviation exhibition), and FIBRESAT 86 (the International Conference on Satellite and Fibre Optic Communications).

B. International Participation

The Specialized Periods program was less successful in attracting international participation in displays and demonstrations than in professional conferences and seminars. There are a number of reasons for this.

- **Inadequate Marketing and Promotion.** The Specialized Periods budget did not include resources for effectively marketing and promoting opportunities to exhibit equipment. This was a critical omission.
- **No Direct Approach to Relevant Industries.** Because of protocol and corporate policy, Specialized Periods staff wasted time trying to work through the EXPO 86 Participants Division and the offices of the Commissioner Generals to solicit the participation of relevant industries.