

FOREWORD

This final issue of Volume 4 of the *International Journal* contains a group of articles based upon papers presented to a conference held in July 1988, at the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom, on the subject of "Deregulation and Labour Law: The British and American Experience". The conference was sponsored by the Hofstra University School of Law, and took place under the direction of Dr. Brian Napier, of Queen's College, Cambridge.

The theme of "deregulation" has grown in significance during the 1980s. It has received much of its impetus from policies adopted on both sides of the Atlantic, under the governments of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, in the United Kingdom, and President Ronald Reagan, in the United States of America. However, concern with such perceived tendencies has not been confined only to commentators in those two countries, and the important implications of "deregulatory" policies across, in particular, broad fields of social law have been recognised in discussions at a variety of international meetings during recent years.

The international perspective from which "deregulation" needs to be viewed when Labour Law matters are concerned is sharply illustrated by the contribution from Lord Wedderburn, who includes as matters for attention in his critical survey some of the responses to developments in this field offered by academic writers during the past decade. That presentation, which also provides a pithy account of the impact of such policies upon the British collective bargaining picture, is built upon by Brian Napier, who looks in detail at the effects of a policy of deregulation upon the individual employment relationship. Many of the issues raised in relation to the British experience are then reflected in the wide-ranging contribution of Samuel Kaynard, who reviews United States developments against a long historical perspective, with particular reference to "the Reagan years". The group of papers is rounded off by a comparative study of deregulation policies in the British and American construction industries, presented by Stephen Evans and Roy Lewis.

This highly topical set of articles provides an interesting, and, on occasions, disconcerting, picture of the impact of deregulatory policies in Britain and America during the 1980s. The *International Journal* is grateful to Brian Napier for his work in co-ordinating preparation of the papers selected for publication in this issue.

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