

Editors' Foreword

The last issue of the *International Journal* for 1993 offers an unashamedly Euro-centric perspective upon recent developments in the fields of Labour Law and industrial relations.

This reflects, in part, a recognition of the importance which has to be attached to the final ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, but also has to be seen as an indication of just how quickly affairs are moving in the European Continent, and what dramatic pressures are being brought to bear upon the very institutions and actors which make up the "classical" systems with which we have all been familiar to date.

Thus, in this issue's ARTICLES section, fundamental questions relating to the Social Policy Agreement, entered into by eleven European Community Member States at Maastricht, are posed by Antonio Ojeda-Avilés in his consideration of collective bargaining reality and prospects at the European level, while the perspective taken by Martin Rhodes, in his study of the emerging European labour market, is one which he characterises as the setting of a "new agenda". Meanwhile, the enormous difficulties which have followed in the wake of German unification are discussed by Otfried Wlotzke, in his detailed study of what must rank as one of this century's most dramatic undertakings.

Nor should it be forgotten that the final ratification of the Maastricht Treaty was made possible only after careful deliberation of the constitutional implications of that arrangement for Germany. The decision of the Federal Constitutional Court, paving the way for that ratification, is considered in the SELECTED CASE LAW section by Manfred Weiss, who indicates some of the reservations expressed by the Court in relation to the division of powers between the Community and individual Member States, and, at the same time, points out some of the potential for the Court's decision to become yet another "ticking time-bomb" under the project of European Union.

In the DOCUMENTATION section, we present the texts of a group of instruments approved at the 80th annual session of the International Labour Conference, including the new Convention and Recommendation concerning the prevention of major industrial accidents, together with the Resolution on exposure to, and safety in the use of, biological agents at work.

Finally, the DIARY section contains information about some of the most important international meetings to be held during 1994, along with a number of "markers" for future events taking place in 1995 and 1996.

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