

Editorial

The last issue of this year opens with a contribution by Roy Adams (McMaster University, Ontario) and Ray Markey (University of Wollongong, Australia) who examine State influence on trade union growth covering three very important areas in terms of industrial relations: Europe, North America and Australasia.

Their conclusion that overall behaviour of government may have a greater effect on industrial relations than the specifics of any piece of legislation suggests that public policy is more important than labour legislation, which must leave lawyers and politicians with a lot of food for thought.

Bernard Ryan (University of Kent) examines recent developments in Community law with regard to the explicit exclusion of pay and trade union rights from the Maastricht Agreement on Social Policy and, in the future, the EC Treaty itself. He examines the effects of this exclusion in a wider framework of competitive deregulation, subsidiarity and diversity.

Lee Swepston (International Labour Organisation, Geneva) presents an authoritative survey of the ILO's supervisory system. His contribution is the first in a series on the implementation of international labour standards. From 1998 onwards, surveys of case law and comments on important cases from various international supervisory bodies and courts will appear regularly in this Journal.

Future issues of the Journal will provide comments on landmark cases from such institutions as the EC Court of Justice and the European Court on Human Rights. In addition, regular surveys will also be published of the case law of international supervisory bodies which are less easy to obtain (e.g., ILO Committees of Expert and Freedom of Association; UN Committees on Human Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; European Social Charter Committee of Experts).

The aim of the future series is to provide our readers with an up-to-date record of international case law which, in one way or another, is very relevant in the domestic context.

The Documentation section of this Journal provides the recently adopted Council Directives to extend the application of the EC Directives on the European Works Council and Parental Leave to the United Kingdom; two impact assessment forms with regard to proposals for Directives to extend the application of both Directives to small and medium sized enterprises; and, finally, the Commission's Work programme for 1998.

L.B.