

medical and legal aspects of alcohol, covering the effects of alcohol, associated problems, its metabolism and detection after death and its involvement in the law, both in road laws and the defence of intoxication. The author seems to find the position of the High Court in *R. v. O'Connor*¹ socially unacceptable, and hints at the need for Parliament to intervene here.

Only occasionally does the book become technical; this is in the medical area, and to be expected. Good background chapters are included on the legal system, and in general the book presents an excellent overview without needless complication. Nonetheless, it may have been advisable to explain some basic medical points; obviously only a limited amount could be covered, but it may have been possible to define medical terms, perhaps in a glossary, for the sake of non-medical readers. Short historical sketches give the book added interest, although some details about sources used here could easily have made this part of the book more useful. In other areas, the references are many and detailed, and the text throughout is lucid and easily read. The book is well set out and contains many colour plates to enhance the text in medical areas. Perhaps closer attention could have been given to some anticipated legislative action and recent enactments; for example, discussion of the effect of the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic.) on accessibility to patients' records and files in public hospitals could have been included.

The ethical, medical and legal aspects of Dr Plueckhahn's subject are covered well, and successfully related to each other. The book should be very useful to doctors and lawyers, who can each benefit from a better understanding of the work of the other profession. Apart from being invaluable for these reasons, this book will be of considerable use to students and various professional people, as well as holding great interest to the general reader wishing for a clearer perspective of modern problems in legal medicine.

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A Modern Introduction to International Law by Michael Akehurst (4th edition George Allen and Unwin (Publishers) Ltd, London, 1982) pp. 1-304. Price \$49.50 (hardback) \$17.95 (paperback) ISBN 0 04 341019 7, 0 04 341020 0.

Dr Akehurst's introduction to international law is now in its fourth edition, but possibly is not yet well known to the audience to which it is directed. Its aim, as the title suggests, is not to become a definitive work, but to accomplish the equally difficult task of producing a concise and easily digestible outline of the intricacies of international law for those approaching the subject for the first time. Here the book is largely successful, partly because of its combination of international affairs and international politics with the law. The topics with which international law has traditionally concerned itself are each addressed and their issues comprehensively outlined. Helpfully, due emphasis is given to those areas of development in international law which are the most relevant to, and, with good fortune, will assist in resolving, contemporary international disputes. Accordingly there is a separate chapter on the self-determination principle, including a valuable discussion of the consequences of violations of the right of self-determination. Dr Akehurst concludes with a rejection of the view put by some Afro-Asian writers that a right of collective self-defence can be lawfully exercised as a basis for intervention by foreign states in wars of national liberation. There is also a brief chapter on air space and outer space law, mentioning the important Article 4 of the Outer Space Treaty, which provides that nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction must not be placed in orbit around the earth.

The book's claim to being a modern introduction to the subject is not entirely substantiated however. Many of the recent decisions are duly noted, such as the Iranian Hostages case,¹ the new British policy of non-recognition of governments, and *Texaco v. Libya*.² But of course textbooks can never hope to

¹ (1980) 29 A.L.R. 449

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¹ *U.S.A. v. Iran* (1980) 19 *International Legal Materials* 553.

² (1978) 17 *International Legal Materials* 1.

be entirely up to date, as is shown by several omissions. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, signed at Montego Bay, Jamaica by 118 states on 10 December 1982, is discussed only as far as the UNCLOS conference meeting in August 1981. The controversial resource-sharing provisions and the correctly-predicted U.S. attitude are included, however. The *Tunisia-Libya Continental Shelf Case*³ adding to, as it does, the *North Sea Continental Shelf cases*⁴ will be missed, as will discussion of such incidents as the Falklands War. But the reservations as to the modernity of the work stem from the venerable nature of many of the examples chosen. The question of so-called international servitudes, for instance, is illustrated by the *Aaland Islands Case*⁵ whereas it could be suggested that more modern instances, such as the permission some foreign states have been granted to establish military bases, could have been cited. A second reservation as to modernity is the precisianism shown in the inclusion of the traditional content of the subject. But both these comments can be said to be strengths of the work, as it means a reader will leave the book with a precise and straightforward account of international law's basic principles and familiar applications.

Some criticism can be directed at the coverage certain topics are given. The chapter entitled 'Jurisdiction' devotes half of its space to the question of extradition and yet relegates the passive personality principle, one of the bases of jurisdiction, to a footnote, in what is generally an unhappy treatment. A detailed account of the law relating to diplomats is given, but at the other end of the scale, the emerging law relating to refugees, including the principle of non-refoulement, goes unmentioned. A deeper analysis of the cases and more noting of further cases that have influenced international law would assist those seeking a fuller understanding of the area.

Suggestions for further reading are listed for each of the nineteen chapters, in addition to those given in the footnotes. There is also a table of cases, the citations for which must be found in the text, and a good index. The startling omission of a preface in an introductory work cannot however be justified, even by Francis Bacon's admonition that prefaces are a great waste of time.

Dr Akehurst euphemistically describes the violent overthrow in 1919 of the Costa Rican dictator, Tinoco, as his 'retirement'. No such devices are required in recommending this book to all those who have thought they ought to acquire some understanding of the law of nations.

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³ I.C.J. Reports, 1982, p. 1.

⁴ I.C.J. Reports, 1969, p. 1.

⁵ League of Nations, *Official Journal*, special supplement No. 3 (1920), 3.

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