

In conclusion, this is a timely contribution to the effort to conserve Harare's old buildings, yet it also provides a fascinating insight in to a style and way of life now past but leaving its imprint all around us. It is encouraging to see this heritage recognized.

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**Business Law in Zimbabwe** By R. H. Christie. Cape Town, Juta, 1985, lviii, 575 pp., R85.00, ISBN 0-7021-1573-8.

As the author states, this book is a successor to his *Rhodesian Commercial Law*,<sup>1</sup> a volume which he admitted was obsolete almost as soon as it was printed. One of the primary purposes of that work was to provide a commercial law text covering all three territories of the Federation. The new work is confined to the present Zimbabwean law but is no less ambitious in its attempt to provide a comprehensive coverage of the legal aspects of business in Zimbabwe.

The work is clearly intended as a simple exposition of the main areas of law likely to be encountered by the average businessman, accountant, chartered secretary or non-legal professional in the conduct of his day-to-day business affairs. For the practising lawyer it will be a useful primer; however, the coverage of most topics is superficial and there is a lack of 'in depth' coverage of the issues at the 'cutting edge' of legal development. While this is accepted as a necessity in a book of this nature (otherwise it would run to four or five volumes), it becomes very easy for the layman or student of business law to slip into the typical lay assumption that law is static, whereas in a society such as present day Zimbabwe it is dynamic.

As is inevitable with a legal text, certain aspects of the book are already out of date, for example the chapter on Employment which will require amendment pursuant to the passing of the Labour Relations Act (No. 16 of 1985). These perennial problems for the legal writer, of instant obsolescence by the addition of legislation, could be mitigated by reference in the introduction to each section of possible new directions which might be followed, given the socialist aspirations of Government. The author has never professed to be anything other than a 'black letter' lawyer, but a little social context, particularly for the business-oriented reader, would help the layman to understand the function and purpose of the various branches of the law. An example of this can be seen in the perfunctory treatment of co-operative companies and co-operative societies in the chapter on the options available when starting a business (p. 139). At least some mention could have been made of the major efforts by Government to promote co-operatives as a development technique. It is important not only for the emergent co-operatives themselves to know of their options but also for other business enterprises or ancillary organizations such as insurance companies and banks to know the nature (even if only postulated) of the type of organizations they are, or are likely to be, dealing with.

Similarly, in the chapter on Sale, I could find no reference to either the

<sup>1</sup>R. H. Christie, *Rhodesian Commercial Law* (Cape Town, Juta, 1961).

average consumer or consumer protection. The reason, no doubt, is that the book deals specifically with law for the businessman. However, I believe it is necessary at least to mention the problems attached to the exercise of legal rights by the consumer. It is clearly insufficient merely to point out the remedies which exist as it is a trite fact that most consumers cannot afford to pursue the remedy through the courts, and must at best rely on bodies such as the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe for assistance in negotiating a remedy. Given the market, the book is primarily aimed at some discussion of liens, and similar remedies might also have been expected, perhaps in a chapter devoted to 'Remedies'.

Zimbabweanizing the law cannot be achieved solely by relegating the South African and English cases to the footnotes. This technique may show the Zimbabwean aspects of many areas of the law but, regrettably, it does not give an accurate picture of the whole compass of the law in a given area. *Holmdene Brickworks (Pvt) Ltd. v. Roberts Construction Co. Ltd.*, 1977 (3) S.A. 670 (A), is a seminal decision in both the development of damages in contract and the addition remedies, yet it is consigned to a footnote in both the chapters in which it is mentioned.

The chapter on Negotiable Instruments would, I am sure, have been greatly improved by the addition of illustrations. Although most people handle and issue negotiable instruments constantly, they are, by and large, singularly ignorant about them. This great mystery area of the law could be significantly demystified by the use of simple illustrations accompanied by short explanations. More emphasis could have been given to cheques and their crossings, the effect or non-effect of crossings, and the purpose of the lines and squiggles added to cheques. One only has to deal in the market place to discover how many business employees are hideously ignorant of even the simplest aspects of this branch of law. Unless I am mistaken, there is no reference to the use of cheque cards, a practice which is becoming increasingly necessary both for the consumer and the businessman alike. Admittedly, this lies outside the provisions of the Bills of Exchange Act, but business reality must be considered in such a text.

Lest I give the impression that the book is unsatisfactory, let me point out that it will prove to be a major contribution to the Zimbabwe business scene. Apart from my earlier comment on the absence of discussion on co-operatives, the chapter on Starting a Business is both useful and simply explained. Similarly, the chapter, albeit brief, on Importing and Exporting will prove invaluable to all those interested in the legal aspects of business as a whole. The book will prove particularly valuable to students of business law, largely because of its clear exposition of the legal rules and principles in a wide range of topics. It will also serve as a sound primer for the law student and legal practitioner.

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**Roots Rocking in Zimbabwe** By Fred Zindi. Gweru, Mambo Press, 1985, viii, 98 pp., illus., Z\$6.18 (p/b), ISBN 0-86922-360-7.

The covers of Zindi's *Roots Rocking in Zimbabwe* are a potent advertisement for the intervening text, both to Thomas Mapfumo's fans and to the author-cum-