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Book Review: Legal Services for the Community, by Michael Zander

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topics as the past employment activities of federal employees in the Ethics in Government Act of 1978.1

The two chapters dealing with areas of current controversy are fascinating reading for a Canadian. They demonstrate the similarity of the public rhetoric while underscoring the lack of legal or administrative regulation of conflict-of-interest in this country. The debate ranges over the advisability of requiring public disclosure of financial interest, past employment restrictions; President Carter's conflict-of-interest requirements for his appointees and the role of Congress in approving such appointments. In a post-election environment in Canada, one can see the same debates emerging in a Canadian context. The difference is that, in Canada, past practice suggests that the issues will be resolved at the political level, thereby circumventing the more permanent standard setting process of statutory or administrative regulation of the problem.

This book is excellent reading for anyone interested in the topic of conflict-of-interest and particularly its regulation in the United States federal executive branch. The book is required and provocative reading for anyone interested in developing a similar analysis of the problem in Canada. It is hoped that its existence will stimulate a more extensive coverage of this problem in the Canadian legal and social literature.

RICHARD H. McLAREN*

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The last decade has witnessed a growing public discussion about the English legal profession and the provision of legal services to British society. This public discussion has been stimulated in no small part by the writing and commentary of Professor Michael Zander of the law department of the London School of Economics. Zander has been in the forefront of British research into restrictive practices, unmet legal needs, and particularly the provision of legal services to low-income citizens. His writing, which has appeared in academic journals and The Guardian newspaper (he is their legal correspon-
dent), strengthened the growing demand for a review of the professional monopoly of barristers and solicitors. As a result of the demand the Royal Commission on Legal Services was charged, in February 1976, with investigating all aspects of legal services in England and Wales, and specifically to consider the question of whether the legal profession's monopoly should be retained intact and whether the conventions should be retained that divide the profession. The Royal Commission, which reported in October 1979, stimulated an unprecedented amount of discussion about the legal profession and was welcomed as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to scrutinize legal education, professional training and competence and the earnings of barristers and solicitors.

Zander's *Legal Services for the Community* is an expansion of his written evidence to the Royal Commission on Legal Services and is the culmination of more than a decade's study of the English legal profession by its most eminent commentator. Including much of his earlier research in the field, it brings together in one volume a comprehensive description and analysis of the public and private sectors of the British legal profession as well as of the alternatives to traditional delivery methods in legal services.

One of the significant aspects of *Legal Services for the Community* is Zander's detailed description of the development of law centres. Here the author compares the American model of legal aid developed within the philosophical framework of the war on poverty with the English system of judicature which was established in the period immediately following World War II under the direction of the Law Society. Zander's personal commitment to the introduction of community legal services in Great Britain has provided him with intimate knowledge of the previously unwritten history of the burgeoning law centre movement. The superbly detailed description of the development of law centres in England during the 1970s, in the face of opposition of the Law Society which had been operating a judicature (private solicitor) scheme since the early 1950s, is sufficient reason to read the book, for Zander has added an important chapter to the growing literature on legal aid. His description and analysis of the development of legal services in the public sector makes the book a required companion to Earl Johnson Jr.'s definitive study of neighborhood law offices in the United States, *Justice and Reform*.¹

Zander raises one issue which has thus far been ignored in the on-going Canadian discussion of the merits of judicature vis-à-vis community legal services. He is concerned about the discrepancy between the highly technical and specific financial criteria required

¹ (1974).
to obtain legal aid provided by the judicare schemes as compared to
the flexible and often vague eligibility requirements of community
law centres. The client who applies for legal aid from the judicare
legal aid plan will be carefully screened as to his financial resources
and will often be required to contribute to the cost of legal services.
Zander asks whether law centres are conferring a benefit on clients
who utilize their services on a gratuitous basis which is denied to
clients with an equivalent income who attempt, through legal aid, to
retain a solicitor in private practice. Examining this issue at great
length, Zander is ultimately unprepared to require law centres to
impose more stringent economic criteria for their services, out of
concern that this requirement could fundamentally change their
approach to legal services.

Readers of Zander’s earlier writing will be surprised to find that
the author no longer advocates a Legal Services Commission to
coop-ordinate, manage and stimulate civil and criminal legal aid for
England and Wales. In Legal Services for the Community, Zander
agrees with the submission of the Lord Chancellor’s Legal Aid
Advisory Committee that no sufficient case has been made for
divesting the Law Society of its stewardship of civil legal aid.
Though agreeing in principle with both the analysis and recommenda-
tions of the Osler Commission on Legal Aid in Ontario—that legal
aid should be governed by a board of governors and not by the Law
Society of Upper Canada—Zander states that in England and Wales
the Law Society is merely a manager: all significant decisions being
made by government. It is government which ultimately determines
the amount of monies available for legal aid and whether the private
or the public sector is to be encouraged in the provision of legal
services. He cites the withdrawal of legal aid from undefended
divorces in England as an example of a situation where the ultimate
and crucial decision was made by government (the Lord Chancellor’s
department) in face of the Law Society’s opposition. Although he
acknowledges the need for co-ordination of decision-making and
overview of legal services in criminal and civil matters in both the
public and private sectors by informed professionals and lay persons,
Zander backs away from recommending a legal services commission
similar to those in Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British
Columbia. He suggests rather that the expansion of the role of the
Lord Chancellor’s Legal Aid Advisory Committee is the most
effective method of developing a variety of alternatives to the
provision of legal services which will, in the end, be paid for by
government. Pragmatic as this approach may be, this writer would
question Zander’s conclusion submitting that the Saskatchewan
Legal Services Commission has demonstrated that there is an
effective role for a commission composed of representatives of the
consumers of legal aid, the profession, and government who together
administer the legal aid budget and set priorities in the delivery of legal services.

*Legal Services for the Community* is essential reading for the growing number of lawyers and law students in Canada who are concerned with evaluating the role of the legal profession and specifically legal aid in the face of changing professional and economic expectations of the public and government. In particular Zander’s description of the non-lawyer’s role in providing legal services in solicitors’ offices and directly to the public is of considerable interest. He examines the relationship between the legal, para-legal and lay advisors and provides interesting descriptive data about the work of non-lawyers in citizens advice bureaus, trade unions, consumer advice centres and housing advice centres. Zander examines the profession creatively, providing a highly critical yet significant commentary on the English legal profession—a commentary and evaluation which sheds light on the path likely to be walked in Canada.

Zander’s journalistic style, carried over from his *Guardian* assignments, actually makes the text enjoyable reading—a rare compliment for a piece of legal academic writing. Although many readers will disagree with Zander’s recommendations, they will nevertheless be provoked to reconsider, if not change, their opinions about certain professional issues. Zander has chosen to present his own views in the context of the significant evidence to the Royal Commission on Legal Services and his insightful comments upon the evidence of others is often fascinating. Even the *Law Society Gazette*’s reviewer acknowledged that the book was ‘‘...very readable—and generally speaking—plausible and surprisingly it is not quite as infuriating as one might perhaps have expected’’.  

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