

Book Review: The Current Industrial Relations Scene in Canada 1977, eds W. D. Wood and Pradeep Kumar

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THE CURRENT INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SCENE IN CANADA 1977, eds. W. D. WOOD and PRADEEP KUMAR, Kingston: Queen's University, Industrial Relations Centre, 1977. (\$40.00)

This book provides an excellent overview of industrial relations in Canada during the past year. The variety of topics covered in the book will attract all specialists in the field of industrial relations, whether lawyers, economists, personnel directors or government policy makers.

Chapters are devoted to: The Economy, Manpower and Labour Markets, Labour Legislation and Policy, Trade Unionism, Collective Bargaining and Labour Relations, and Wages, Productivity and Labour Costs. In addition, there is a section dealing with Current Economic and Industrial Relations Indicators. The book ends with a Reference Section containing an annotated bibliography of recent publications relating to industrial relations, as well as a list of useful sources of information for those interested in industrial relations.

Each chapter contains a summary outline of developments in the area under study. New and proposed legislation and government programmes are discussed, as well as events in the trade union movement and collective bargaining. Frequent reference is made to parallel developments in the United States. This summary is followed by Technical Notes, which describe the sources of data, methodology, and definitions and concepts. A large section in each chapter is given over to Reference Tables, which present graphically much of the information disclosed in the summary outline.

The book can be criticized for what are at most minor flaws. The absence of an index makes the selective reader's task more difficult in finding particular information. Some assistance comes from a detailed Table of Contents and the use of italicized words and phrases throughout the paragraphs of the Summary Outline. For example, "female union membership" is italicized in the section dealing with trade unionism.

A second improvement could come in the sections of the Labour Legislation chapter dealing with judicial and arbitral decisions through the addition of full case names in references to decisions. Citations would be helpful, but they are not necessary if full case names are given.

A few inconsistencies appear, as is to be expected in a book that must be prepared quickly and by several contributors. For example, the Labour Legislation chapter refers to the recent Canada Labour Relations Board certification of bank branches, while the Trade Unionism chapter says that the decisions are still pending.

These criticisms are not major, for the book is deserving largely of praise. The casual reader who wants a quick review of industrial relations developments can find it here in the summary outlines, as can the serious student who wants ready access to current data on labour law, the economy, collective agreement negotiations, or union membership.