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Recent Publications

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Recent Publications

OVERCOMING LEGAL UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT THE USE OF SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS. By William A. Thomas, Alan S. Miller and Richard L. Robbins. American Bar Foundation, 1151 Sixtieth St., Chicago, Ill., 60637. 1978. Pp. viii, 80. \$5.00

This work provides its readers with an expeditious introduction to the subject of solar energy use and the legal questions it poses. With concise language and a practical perspective, the authors analyze the role of the federal government in encouraging the use of solar energy as well as the roles of state and local governments in encouraging solar energy use and making it a practical alternative through the use of zoning ordinances, exercise of eminent domain and recognition of light easements.

The authors do not merely pose the role of the respective governments, but present four model statutes with relevant commentary. The statutes in turn provide for (1) a Solar Energy Commission to study the subject; (2) Solar-Skyspace Easements; (3) Encouraging Use of Solar Energy Systems; and (4) Tax Incentives, both personal and property. These statutes provide a basis for state or federal legislation, agency regulations or local ordinances. Accompanying commentary reveals both the purposes and effects of the legislative language in a strikingly practical manner. For example, the authors comment on tax incentives as follows: "From the point of view of a manufacturer or distributor or installer, an incentive serves a publicity function and lowers the cost to consumers."

The most valuable aspect of this work is that it presents the entire panorama of political and legal issues to which the use of solar energy gives rise. As such, *Overcoming Legal Uncertainties About Use of Solar Energy Systems* is an excellent synopsis of the subject and the responsible footnoting renders this work a practical starting point on the subject.

J.M.S.

THE LEGAL NEEDS OF THE PUBLIC: THE FINAL REPORT OF A NATIONAL SURVEY. By Barbara A. Curran. American Bar Foundation, 1151 Sixtieth St., Chicago, Ill., 60637. 1977. Pp. xxvii, 382. \$25.00.

This is an informative, lucid, and provocative book. It should prove to be invaluable to the legal profession, legislative bodies, and those communities intent on making the law equally accessible to all persons. It should also be of interest to those involved in sociology and political science as well as the members of other professional disciplines who are concerned with the development and improvement of the delivery of legal services to the American public.

This comprehensive survey undertaken jointly by the American Bar Association Special Committee to Survey Legal Needs and the American Bar Foundation, provides a wealth of information regarding the extent of legal difficulties encountered by the public. In addition, the survey provides data regarding the public behavior when confronted with such legal problems. The book also deals with the nature of legal services sought and received by the public and society's attitudes concerning lawyers, courts, and the legal system in general.

It is not possible to summarize the findings of this exhaustive survey in a few words. Indeed, the principal message to be derived from this survey is that the legal needs of individuals do not lend themselves to the broad generalizations often made about them. Accordingly, the author's most pertinent recommendation to those concerned with filling the legal needs of the public is to read the survey report.

L.T.P.

MANUAL FOR COMPLEX LITIGATION. Prepared by the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation Comment Clearing House, Inc.,

4525 W. Peterson Ave., Chicago, Ill., 60646. 1978. Pp. xxix, 362.
\$6.00.

This work presents a comprehensive outline of suggested procedures in the handling of complex and multidistrict litigation. The Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation has divided the manual into three main sections. The first part, entitled "Suggested Procedures for Pretrial and Trial of Complex Litigation," contains a condensed version of the entire program of procedures recommended for pretrial and trial of complex litigation. Part two is an appendix of materials which are keyed to the initial section and includes a collection of legal materials, briefs, documents, forms, sample orders and suggested local rules for implementing the recommended pretrial and trial procedures. The third section lists a number of cases which deal with important decisions relating to complex litigation. This section also provides an outline of some of the key issues that have been raised in this area of the law.

The stated premise of this manual is to provide a means to improve the quality of justice in complex cases without increasing the burden on the litigants. The types of litigation included in this "complex" category are those presenting unusual problems which require extraordinary treatment such as proceedings involving antitrust issues, common disasters, class actions and products liability. With the current increase in these types of cases, the Judicial Panel's effort is greatly appreciated and is a significant aid to those involved in complex litigation. Although the manual is aimed at the bench, it can also be used effectively by the bar in the preparation and handling of such complex cases.

G.S.

