

suggestions. Find the time to have a look at the digest. Drop a line to the A.L.R.C. with your ideas for improving this work. It could be a helpful research tool for legislators, judges, reformers and even busy practitioners.

RECENT PROPOSALS

The last quarter has seen a number of important proposals for law reform. In the High Court, a number of judgments have again called attention to the need for a new look at the statutes by which the jurisdiction of the Court is regulated. Moller v. Roy (1975) 49 A.L.J.R. 311 at p.316 (Barwick C.J.) p.316 (Gibbs J.) p.318 (Stephen J.) p.319 (Mason J.) and p.319 (Jacobs J.)

The first reports of the Australian Law Reform Commission were produced within the deadline set by the previous Government. They contain extensive proposals for handling complaints against police and interim recommendations for police practice in criminal procedure. The complaints procedure suggested is basically the use of the Ombudsman and, in vexed cases, reference to a judge so that justice may be "seen to be done". The interim "Criminal Investigation" report proposed the introduction of specific criteria for arrest and bail, tape recording of police confessions, the use of "prisoner's friends" for Aborigines and children under restraint, time limits on police custody of persons "assisting with inquiries" and limitations on access to criminal data. Numerous other proposals were put forward. The proposals had a good reception in the press. The Sydney Morning Herald even went so far as to suggest that the recommendations "should be used as a basis for long overdue reform in the States". The Australian called them "constructive proposals" that "should not be ignored". Legislation was before the Federal Parliament to implement the police complaints procedure, when Parliament was dissolved.

The Tasmanian L.R.C. has produced a report on alcohol and drugs and road safety with an attached Bill to update the breathalyzer legislation of that State. This subject is also under study for the Territories by the A.L.R.C. The Tasmanian Commission has reported on criminal process dealing especially with fingerprinting and search of persons in custody. Limits on circulation of fingerprints are proposed because of the near impossibility of retrieval in the event of acquittal. The right to have a medical practitioner present during a body search is also recommended.

The important N.S.W. L.R.C. report on Proceedings by and Against the Crown just missed tabling in the December sittings of the N.S.W. Parliament and will be circulated shortly.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Australian Law Reform Commission : (A.L.R.C.) :

Two reports on the police reference have now been published, "Complaints Against Police" (A.L.R.C.1) and "Criminal Investigation" (A.L.R.C.2). The third report, "Annual Report 1975" (A.L.R.C.3) was tabled in the Federal Parliament on the morning of 11 November just before the Parliament was dissolved by the Governor-General. On 10 November 1975 the then Attorney-General announced a programme for the A.L.R.C. Some of the items on the programme were suggested by the A.L.R.C. None of the items was formally referred in accordance with the Law Reform Commission Act. The programme was:

- Bail : Revision of Territories law as to Court Bail.
- Consumer Credit : Small Debtors' moratorium (Bankruptcy Act).
- Crimes at Sea : Consolidation of Commonwealth laws.
- Defamation : A national law for Australia.
- Evidence : A code of Evidence for Federal Courts in Australia.
- Insurance : Standard forms of Insurance Contracts.
- Motor Traffic Laws : Territories' laws as to the Breathalyzer.
- Organ & Tissue transplant laws.
- Royal Commissions Act : updating inquiry procedures.
- Subordinate Legislation : revision of procedures.