Supreme Court Library Notes

FAREWELL

The library staff wish JAMES HEBRON all the best in Tasmania. James has been on the library committee since December 1995, representing the Law Society. He has been invaluable as a source of ideas and the library staff will miss his sense of humour.

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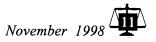
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S ketches on Territory Legal History

by the Hon. Justice Mildren

The Hon. Justice Pater First Judge of the Northern Territory

After the disastrous first and only circuit sittings conducted by a Judge of the Supreme Court of South Australian in Palmerston in 1875, the South Australian Parliament passed the Northern Territory Justice Act 1875¹ which provided for the granting of a commission by the Governor authorising the holding of criminal and civil sittings of the Court presided over by a commissioner. Under the Act, the commissioner was required to be a practitioner of the Supreme Court of at least seven years' standing or a Special Magistrate. Between 1875 and 1884 the practice was to appoint the Government Resident a Special Magistrate - even though he had no legal qualifications - so that commissions could be granted to him.² Commissioners could try all except capital offences. Criminal trials were thereafter tried by a commissioner and a jury of six.3

In 1884, the government decided to amend the Act so that all offences could be tried locally. This required the appointment of a Judge, to be styled "The Judge of the Northern Territory". As part of this arrangement, the office of Judge was to be separated from that of Government Resident. The Act was duly amended in October 1884,⁴ and on 8 October 1884, the government appointed Thomas Kennedy Pater SM as the first Judge on a salary of £1,000 per annum.

Mr Justice Pater was born in England in 1837 and was admitted to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1859. He practised chiefly in the criminal courts of the Middlesex Sessions and the Old Bailey. In 1864, when appearing as counsel at the Middlesex General Sessions, he was fined £20 for contempt of court for comments he made during his address to the jury about the conduct of the foreman. An attempt to quash the conviction by certiorari failed.5 His contra-temps with the court interfered with his practice for a while, although it was generally thought amongst the profession that though legally wrong, he was morally right in asserting his rights as an advocate6 and it is fair to record that the judgment of Cockburn CJ was also critical of the conduct of the Judge who had allowed the foreman to misbehave, thereby prompting Pater's remarks. Subsequently he served as Crown Prosecutor in Sierra

Leone for a while, before returning to London to resume his practice. Subsequently he was admitted to the Bar in Tasmania and in Victoria before settling in Adelaide in 1874 where he practised principally in the area of criminal law.7 He was a close friend of the barrister William Villeneuve Smith whom he had met in London whilst the latter was a student, and he appeared as Smith's counsel at his trial for criminal libel.8 He appears to have been a tall person, (his grandfather, who served under the Duke of Wellington, was described as one of the tallest men in the British Army) and he wore a full beard. He was considered to be a very effective advocate and speaker, despite a theatrical and somewhat demonstrative manner,9 and the habit of speaking in a slow, drawling tone.10 Between 1874-1884 he practised in Adelaide, with some notable successes. In late 1883 or early 1884 the government offered him the position of Stipendiary Magistrate in Palmerston, with a promise of the judgeship as soon as the legislation could be passed. He was appointed to the Magistrate's position on 19 March 1884, and arrived in Palmerston with his wife Emily and two daughters on the SS Menmuir, together with the new Government Resident, J.L. Parsons, on 8 May 1884.11

The following day, at an official ceremony held at the new Courthouse on the Esplanade¹² to welcome Parsons, the latter explained that the government had decided to send an experienced lawyer to Palmerston to preside over the Courts and to separate judicial functions from those of the executive.¹³

The local inhabitants initially greeted Pater with some enthusiasm, but this was soon to change. Pater began disastrously with some jocular and harmless remarks at a welcome dinner held at the Town Hall on 12 May 1884 directed at John George Knight and Vaiben Solomon whom he allegedly described respectively as "the modern Lord Eldon and Cicero" who "had jointly conducted the legal affairs of the Territory upon a happy family system of mutual admiration".14 Knight had been sitting as a Special Magistrate. Solomon was the editor of the Northern Territory Times and Gazette, had frequently appeared by leave in the lower courts for litigants who could not secure the services of a lawyer¹⁵ and he clearly took offence. Pater's sense of humour was to cause him more trouble soon thereafter. The N.T. Times, in a lengthy and critical article published on 14 June 1884 in respect of an application before Pater sitting on the Licensing Court, observed that the Court's duty was to decide the case on the evidence before it, and nothing else, and concluded:

... we hope on future occasions witnesses will be treated with respect and consideration, and not made the butt for satirical sneers and unfeeling jocularity.

The town's other newspaper, the North Australian, was soon to echo these sentiments, commenting in an article published on 25 July 1884 that "Mr Pater's aptitude for making caustic jokes appears to get the better of his common sense." By this time the Bill had been introduced to enable Pater to be appointed as the Judge, and Pater was in the process of conducting criminal sittings as a Commissioner.¹⁶

The following month, both the town's newspapers ran trenchantly critical articles, designed to prevent his appointment. His problems arose out of critical remarks allegedly made about the town's journalists whom he was reported as saying were in the pay of the police.¹⁷ The North Australian commented that he was "grossly unfitted for the position". The N.T. Times accused him of "prosy oratory, pedantic argument and delicate satire", bullying witnesses, interrupting counsel and dictating to the jury, and concluded that his "nervous excitable temperament and hasty, violent temper prove him utterly unfitted for the position of Judge."18 Both articles were reported in the Adelaide Observer, the N.T. Times talking up the cudgels with another trenchant article a week later.¹⁹ In the meantime, efforts were being made in the Legislative Council to defer the passage of the Bill until more information was known, but the Minister advised the House that the Bill did not itself elevate Pater to the bench, but merely created the position, and that, the previous government having promised the position to Pater, that promise would have to be fulfilled unless some grave reason to justify acting otherwise was shown. The Bill passed on 12 August 1884.²⁰ The N.T. Times kept up the assault with yet another critical article on 13 September 1884 in which it reviewed the history of the matter to date. Obviously it was designed to influence a forthcoming meeting of the Northern Territory Reform Association, which discussed the Bill and Pater's appointment at a public meeting held on 15 September, at which meeting Solomon was a principle speaker.



S ketches on Territory Legal History

by the Hon. Justice Mildren

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Solomon successfully moved a motion to the effect that Pater should not be appointed, notwithstanding a vigorous defence by one of the town's lawyers, one Beresford.²¹ Pater was also supported by another of the town's lawyers, Charles E. Herbert, in a letter to the South Australian Register.²² The Adelaide Observer noted that those in favour of the motion included journalists, ex-defendants in police and civil cases, the police and the working classes, whilst those opposed included those who were 'influential': three bank managers, a solicitor, a plantation manager, agents, a storekeeper, a hotel keeper and "others", and that had any civil servants taken part in the meeting, there would have been a large majority in Pater's favour.²³ Pater, himself, kept a dignified silence, and was eventually appointed to the office on 8 October 1884.²⁴ The N.T. Times expressed its intense surprise at the appointment without an enquiry, saying that it was an insult to the people of the Territory; and concluded that it hoped that Pater would take warning and give the press no occasion to find fault with him in the future.²⁵ The N.T. Times had another jibe at Pater on 22 November 1884, accusing him of placing himself in the position of a censor, and "teaching the government their duty".

The following year, Vaiben Solomon again attacked Pater's suitability in a letter to Parsons dated 5 February 1885. Solomon had sought leave to appear in a Local Court case to represent a chinese storekeeper on the ground that the other party had secured the services of Beresford, the only lawyer in the town at the time, and his "client" could speak little English. Pater was sitting with two Justices of the Peace and refused his application without consulting the other members of the Court, on the ground that Solomon had insulted him, referring to the events of the previous year. Solomon sought an inquiry into Pater's fitness. This complaint was supported by letters written by the other justices. Pater was asked to explain by the Attorney-General, Charles Kingston. In a letter of 9 February, 1885, he confirmed the reasons given for refusing Solomon's application were as stated, because he felt that 'the dignity of the Bench should be upheld", and that under s112 of the Local Court Act, 1861, the question was one for him alone. Kingston was of the view that the decision was one for the majority of the Court, but that a contrary opinion may fairly be open, and rejected Solomon's complaint and request for an inquiry.26

Thereafter, the enmity between Pater and Solomon and his supporters seems to have died down, and Justice Pater's term in office fuelled no further controversy. In 1886 he served as Acting Government Resident whilst Parsons was on leave, his wife Emily christening the first locomotive to travel to Pine Creek.²⁷ In the same year, his nineteen year old daughter Emily died of an incurable disease.28 Two of his decisions went to the Full Court and are reported: Rv Nammy and Ah Kong (1886) 20 SALR 65 and R v Whitton (1887) 21 SALR 80.

Towards the end of the decade, South Australia entered a period of severe depression, and as a cost-cutting measure, it was decided to recall Pater and the Government Resident and replace both with a single incumbent.²⁹ In late 1889, both agreed to resign, Pater returning to Adelaide in 1890. where he was appointed a Police Magis-trate.³⁰ $5a^{31}$ In mid 1890, as the government had still not decided on a successor, Pater returned to Palmerston to conduct criminal sittings, returning to Adelaide before the end of the year to assume his Police Court duties. However, the government did not immediately find a successor, and in 1890 John George Knight acted as Government Resident although his permanent appointment was confirmed on 16 July.32 In late 1890 and in 1891 commissions were then conferred on Knight, who was an architect and not legally trained, to conduct criminal sittings in December, June and again in December. Knight died in office on 10 January 1892, and no appointment to the position of Judge was made until 25 February 1892, when Justice Dashwood's appointment was gazetted.33

Justice Pater died suddenly at his home on 9 August 1892 after a very short illness, attributed to "apoplexy and heart disease",34 at the age of fifty-four. His funeral was the largest ever held in Adelaide, the procession involving over two hundred vehicles extending from the General Post Office to St Peter's Cathedral, and the streets literally lined from end to end with spectators.35 He received glowing tributes in the press, none more so than from his old critic, the N.T. Times, which said, that despite his faults, he succeeded in turning his harshest critics into his most earnest admirers, and praised him for his "unbending independence" and ability to do what he thought right regardless of whether his critics agreed with him.³⁶ He left his widow and other daughter in "very necessitous circumstances" as a result of which the former was forced to petition the government for compensation on the grounds that his term in the Territory had diminished his health to such a degree that it eventually led to his death, and had forced his early resignation. Eventually the government paid her £650.37

¹ No 15 of 1875

² Section 9 of the Act originally provided for a sunset clause of 2 years, with a further 3 years by proclamation. The Act was extended for a further 3 years by proclamation in the Government Gazette of 15/7/1877. By amendment No 170 of 1880 the sunset clause was repealed.

³ Although theoretically civil causes could also be tried under the Act, there was no provision for a local registry and consequently there is no known instance of any trial in the Court's civil jurisdiction in the N.T. prior to 1911. There was no provision for appeals from the lower courts.

⁴ Act No 311 of 1884

see Re Pater, ex parte Pater, R v Middlesex Justices (1864) 5 B&S 299; 122 E.R. 842; 4 New Rep 147; 33 LJMC 142; 10 LT 376; 28 JP 612; 10 Jur NS 972; 12 WR 823; 9 Cox CC 544; 3 Digest (Repl) 361. It seems that Pater was harshly dealt with.

The Adelaide Observer, 20/8/1892 7

The Adelaide Observer, 20/8/1892

(1876) 10 SALR 213

See also Re Pater, endnote 5 above, where he is described by Deputy Assistant Judge Payne as having uttered the insulting words "in a loud, threatening insulting tone and manner, and accompanied by violent gestures".

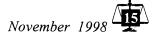
The Adelaide Observer, 20/8/1892 ¹¹ N.T. Times and Gazette (NTTG) 10/ 5/1884

¹² The new stone courthouse was built to replace the original timber building, work having begun in 1879. The building was officially gazetted in May 1884: see Territorian - The Life and Work of John George Knight, D. Carment, H. J. Wilson & B James, Hist. Soc. of N.T. (1993), p49, and NTTG, 10/5/1884. Knight subsequently added a verandah to the rear of the Courthouse and installed punkas he obtained from a passenger vessel which had been scrapped.

¹³ NTTG, 10/5/1884

¹⁴ NTTG, 13/9/1884. The report of his speech in NTTG 17/5/1884 contains no reference to this.

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Law Council of Australia

Law Council Must Continue National Profession Reform Push: President

The newly-elected President of the Law Council of Australia, Mr Fabian Dixon, says the Council, and its member bodies, must continue to drive the national reform of legal profession competition and regulation, given that such reform will bring significant benefits to both lawyers and their clients.

Mr Dixon's comments follow a year of substantial Law Council activity aimed at implementing its National Co-operation project, which would provide a national approach to the operation, and regulation, of the Australian legal profession, and would enhance competition within the profession.

A key component of the National Co-operation scheme would be the adoption of a national 'travelling' practising certificate, which would enable lawyers to provide legal advice and services in each State and Territory of Australia.

Other aspects of the scheme, which are being considered by the Council under the scheme, include the regulation of multidisciplinary practices, admission qualifications for lawyers, professional indemnity insurance, the reservation of legal work for lawyers, incorporation of legal practices, fidelity funds, and trust account regulation.

Mr Dixon says that while the legal profession, through the Council and its constituent bodies, has been very active in the push for national competition reform, the proposals for reform must now be locked-in and presented to regulatory authorities for their approval, before the National Competition Policy deadline in the year 2000.

The National Competition Policy was signed by each State and Territory government in 1995 to ensure that laws restricting competition were reviewed and, if appropriate, reformed.

"The Law Council has worked pro-actively over the past year to develop its reform policies aimed at enhancing the legal profession's competitiveness" says Mr Dixon.

"But it is now time for the Council, and its constituent bodies, to develop the legal profession's final positions on national reform proposals, for consideration by the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General and the National Competition Council. The legal profession should then play a leading role in relation to the implementation of those reform proposals.

"The reform proposals will be of significant benefit to both legal practitioners, and their clients.

"The national 'travelling' practising certificate, for example in enabling legal practitioners to practise law in each State and Territory on one licence, recognises that many clients today have national and international operations.

"For legal practitioners, the reform will mean that they will be able to service their clients regardless of State and Territory boundaries.

"Additionally, the reform of regulations relating to the operations of multi-disciplinary practices - currently being discussed within the Law Council - would enable lawyers to adopt more flexible business practices and structures, in order to better serve their clients. This reform would, of course, need to be done without diminishing lawyers' ethical standards and professional responsibilities.

"Some clients may prefer a 'one stop shop' concept, and through multi-disciplinary practices they would, for example, be able to obtain legal and accounting advice from the one firm. This would enhance choice for clients both in the city and in rural areas.

"There are many other aspects to the Law Council's national co-operation project which will benefit lawyers, but mostly importantly, their clients.

"It is for this reason that the Law Council, and its constituent bodies, must continue the major push to legal profession reform which has already come so far."

Law Council Supports Judge's Legal Aid Comments

The Law Council of Australia says it supports comments made by the Chief Justice of the Family Court, Chief Justice Alastair Nicholson, that the Federal Government's legal aid cuts have caused a crisis in the family law area, and that the Government's reluctance to appoint additional Family Court judges is one of the problems behind delay in the Court.

And the Council has called on the Attor-

ney-General, the Hon. Daryl Williams AM QC MP, to urgently provide much-needed details regarding his plans for a federal magistracy.

The Government's legal aid cuts are continuing to have a devastating effect on the family law system, and the Chief Justice's comments in this regard go to show that it is not only legal practitioners who believe this to be the case - it is the judiciary as well" says the President of the Law Council, Mr Fabian Dixon.

The Chief Justice's comments should send a strong signal to the Government that its legal aid cuts are not improving the justice system-they are, in fact, going a long way to destroying it.

"The Law Council also agrees with the Chief Justice that it is imperative that more judges are appointed to the Family Court. In a recent submission to the Attorney-General, it was recommended that additional judges be appointed to the Court, to try to decrease the extremely concerning level of delay in the Court.

"The Attorney-General yesterday raised again his proposal for establishing a federal magistracy to address the problem of delay in the Family Court.

"The Attorney now acknowledges that delay is a problem in the Family Court - an acknowledgement the Law Council welcomes - and he appears to consider that a federal magistracy ...provides an alternative solution to the problem of delay in the Family Court."

"The Attorney first raised his federal magistracy proposal in May 1996, and his Department released, early last year, a short, confidential paper which set out a number of options for a federal magistracy.

"The Law Council responded by indicating that there were widespread, differing views in the legal community as to the proposal."

"On balance, the Law Council indicated that it had no fundamental objection to the concept of federal magistrates, provided the magistrates were appointed directly to each Federal Court - but the Council saw no justification for the establishment of a separate magistrate's court. The Law Council indicated that the details of the proposal were fundamental - particularly the funding arrangements

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"The problem the Law Council had, and still has, is that, some 29 months after his initial announcement, the Attorney has still not provided any substantive details of the proposed separate magistracy, the administrative model for it or, most importantly, details of its funding.

"The Law Council is still not convinced that a federal magistracy will solve the current problems in the Family Court, and urges the Attorney to provide much-needed details regarding his plans.

"The Law Council is extremely concerned about:

- the level of legal aid for Family Court matters
- the demonstrated large number of litigants in person. The Family Court reports that in 35% of all cases coming before it, one party is unrepresented.
- the appalling problem of delay in the Family Court, which both the Law Council and Chief Justice Nicholson have been highlighting.

These problems continue to confront the Family Court, its litigants and the legal profession, here and now. The Attorney has not posed any time-frame for, and detail of, the establishment of a federal magistracy, and the Law Council considers that even if a proposal was agreed upon today, the lead time for its establishment would be at least one year.

"The Law Council is very disappointed that the Attorney, while at least appearing to acknowledge the problem of delay and unrepresented litigants in the Family Court, is still talking in terms of proposals rather than substantive action."

Reverse Legal Professional Privilege Legislation, Urges Law Council

The Law Council of Australia is urging the Victorian Government to immediately reverse legislation of abrogating legal professional privilege in Royal Commissions, warning that the abrogation of the privilege could lead to a "gross miscarriage of justice."

The Victorian Upper House yesterday passed the legislation, which would abrogate legal professional privilege in the Dawson Royal Commission into Victoria's gas crisis. Legal professional privilege renders confidential, and prevents the compulsory disclosure of, communications between a client and a legal adviser about legal matters.

The Law Council is warning that the abrogation of legal professional privilege in the Dawson Royal Commission may seriously undermine the essential trust required between lawyers and their clients, and may thus erode the ability of the Royal Commission to make proper findings under its terms of reference.

"Legal professional privilege is an established rule of law which underpins the administration of justice in Australia" says the Law Council's President-elect, Dr Gordon Hughes. "It does so by promoting candour, and trust, in communications between lawyers and their clients."

"If legal professional privilege is denied, clients will perceive that anything they say to their lawyer may eventually be used against them, and thus the essential trust between a lawyer and their client will be lost."

"Sir Daryl Dawson, when a High Court Judge, himself urged that legal professional privilege was essential in maintaining a fair justice system. In the case *Baker v Campbell* (1983), Justice Dawson, as he was then, said '... if a client cannot seek advice from his legal adviser confident that he is not acting to his disadvantage in doing so, then his lack of confidence is likely to be reflected in the instructionshe gives, the advice he is given and ultimately in the legal process of which the advice forms part.'

"Legal professional privilege is a doctrine which must be preserved, unless there are exceptional circumstances where higher public policy interests require its abrogration. In the case of the Dawson Royal Commission, the higher public policy interest has not been demonstrated."

"The amendments to the Evidence Act 1958, which effectively abrogate legal professional privilege in Royal Commissions, seem to have been justified by the Victorian Government wanting the Dawson Royal Commission to report by mid 1999."

"In the second reading speech in the Victorian Parliament, the Treasurer of Victoria the Hon. Alan Stockdale MP, referred to the effect of the amendments as being '...to ensure that valuable time and resources are not wasted on associated litigation or technical legal disputes about whether various vital evidence should be produced to a commission."

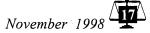
"While the Law Council agrees that the Dawson Commission needs to report in a timely fashion, it is absolutely essential that the Commission does not "cut corners" in achieving this, and that is exactly what the abrogation of legal professional privilege allows."

"It must also be realised that the abrogation of legal professional privilege will now not just be limited to the Dawson Royal Commission - it will apply to any further Royal Commission, and this sets a very dangerous precedent which is totally unjustified."

"The Law Council calls on the Victorian Government to urgently repeal the legislation abrogating legal professional privilege."



David Lurie or Stephen Newman. 3rd floor, 595 Lt Collins St, Melb 3000 Tel (03) 9278 4111 Fax (03) 9629 5507 Email js@ocean.com.au Internet Website http://js.com.au



Appointments - Senior Counsel

The President of the NSW Bar Association, Ian Barker QC, is pleased to announce the names of 19 barristers who have been appointed Senior Counsel (S.C.).

The Successful applicants for 1998 are:

- Anthony Bartley
- Patricia Bergin
- Paul Brereton
- Alan Bridge
- Steven Crawshaw
- Robert Greenhill
- Peter Hennessy
- George Inatey
- Raymond McLoughlin
- David Murr
- Guy Reynolds
- Paul Roberts
- Michael Rudge

- Michael Sexton
- Rodney Smith
- Brendan Sullivan
 - Ian Wales
- Mathew Walton
- **Richard White**

There is no quota system for selecting candidates. Barristers nominate themselves for consideration and then each applicant is judged on individual merit. Appointments are made after wide consultation with other barristers and solicitors, and state and federal judges. The list is then considered by the Chief Justice of New South Wales.

There are currently 1,545 barristers practising in NSW and, taking into account the new admissions, 15% are silks.

The Bar Association extends its warmest congratulations to the successful candidates.

Supreme Court Library Notes

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Theft

Smith, J C Stealing tickets. <u>Criminal Law Review</u>. 1998. pp: 723-727

Trusts and trustees

McDermott, Peter M Lease of trust property for long-term at nominal rent : liability of lessees and mortgagee of the property. <u>Australian</u> <u>Law Journal</u>. Vol 72(10) 1998. pp: 756-757

Vicarious liability Barnett, Daniel Vicarious liability : being your employee's keeper. <u>Solicitors Journal</u>. Vol 142(37) 1998. pp: 890, 892 Wills Pawlowski, Mark Testamentary promises and estoppel. <u>Solicitors Journal</u>. Vol 142(37) 1998. pp:

888-889

Witnesses Finn, Jeremy Secret witnesses, a New Zealand initiative : the Evidence (Witness Anonymity) Amendment Act 1997 (NZ). <u>Criminal</u> <u>Law Journal</u>. Vol 22(5) 1998. pp: 277-281

Women Equality of opportunity for women at the Victorian Bar. <u>Victorian Bar News</u>. Vol No 106 1998. pp: 26-30

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1998. pp: 31-32, 34 Workers compensation Dempsey, Anthony Professional players are being kept down. Law Society Journal. Vol 36(9) 1998. pp: 60-63

 NT LEGISLATION

 Legislative changes in

 1998, notified in the NT Government Gazette

 New Acts

 73/1998
 Racing & Betting Act (12.10.98)

 74/1998
 Energy Resource Consump tion Levy (Waiver of Levy) Act (12.10.98)

 75/1998
 Northern Territory

/ 5/1990	Normern Territory	Com
	Tourist Commission	
	Amdt Act (N/C)	57/19
76/1998	Mineral Royalty Amdt	
	Act (15.10.98)	62/19
77/1998	Cullen Bay Marina Amdt	
	Act (1.12.98)	
78/1998	Legal Aid Amdt Act (N/C)	65/19
79/1998	Criminal Code Amdt Act	
	(N/C)	66/19
80/1998	Darwin Port Authority	
	Amdt Act (N/C)	
81/1998	Juvenile Justice Amdt	67/19
	Act (21.10.98)	
New regula	tions	
46/1998	Racing & Betting	
	Regulations (30.10.98)	68/19
47/1998	Public Trustee	00/19

Regulations (1.12.98)

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48/1998	Administration & Probate Regulations
49/1998	(1.12.98) Public Health (General Sanitation, Mosquito
50/1998	Prevention) (11.11.98) Public Health (Night-Soil, Garbage, Cesspits, Wells)
51/1998	(11.11.98) Building Regulations (11.11.98)
New reprin	ts
Commence	ments
57/1998	Justices Amdt Act (No.
	2) (23.9.98)
62/1998	Legislative Assembly
	(Security) Act
	(14.10.98)
65/1998	Summary Offences Act
	(1.11.98)
66/1998	Administrators
	Pensions Amdt Act
	(20.10.98)
67/1998	Legislative Assembly
	Members' Superannua
	tion Amdt Act
	(20.10.98)
68/1998	Supreme Court (Judges

