

THE VICTORIAN CHIEF JUSTICE'S LAW REFORM COMMITTEE

The article on the work of the above Committee in (1972) 8 *M.U.L.R.* 440 states (at 468):

In so far as the achievements of a law reform organization can be measured by statistics, it should be the proportion of its recommendations accepted by the Government and not the number of matters considered by the Committee, or the number of reports presented, which should be looked at.

The article then examines some of the statistics and concludes that 'roughly 40 *per cent* of the Committee's recommendations have been accepted in whole or in part'. This conclusion appears to be erroneous.

A re-examination of the matters listed in Table 3 of the article has revealed that in connexion with only 86 of them did the Committee recommend legislation (the Table itself shows the symbol '1'—as indicating immediate legislative action recommended—against 92 matters, but its use is hardly justified in at least six instances). Of these, ten recommendations may be regarded as too recent for the Government's decision to be known, while in at least seven other cases the Government has given some indication that it will take appropriate action. Leaving these 17 matters out of account, at least 57 of the remaining 69 have led to legislation in one form or another. This means that over 80 *per cent* of those recommendations have been accepted in whole or in part. Even if none of the 17 recommendations under consideration is adopted (an unlikely assumption), it would remain true that more than 65 *per cent* of the recommendations for legislative change have been acted upon. In some instances where no action has followed, this is easily explicable on grounds other than non-acceptance by the Government of the recommendations. Thus, for example, the recommendations in relation to Child Marriages obviously became redundant at the State level when the Commonwealth shortly afterwards pre-empted the field.

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