

SOURCEBOOK OF SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIAN COMPANY LAW. By PHILIP N. PILLAI, (2nd Edition). [Singapore: Butterworths. 1986. xlvii + 1388 pp. Hardcover: S\$250].

THE second edition of this book, now published by Butterworths, comes eleven years after its first edition was published in 1975 by the Singapore University Press. This is a voluminous book which is intended for the practitioner, though it is very useful to the student too. Since it first appeared, this book has become a “staple” in the libraries of most Singapore and Malaysian law firms. It has even been cited in the Malaysian Federal Court case of *Euco International Sdn. Bhd. v. P.F. Chan*¹.

The author has managed to compile within the covers of one book all the local cases on company law, as well as important cases from other common law jurisdictions sharing the same or similar company law doctrines. Due to the lack of local legal materials on company law, the author has reproduced in full all the local cases. This makes it very convenient for the legal practitioner hard-pressed for time, enabling him to read the cases in full without going through different volumes of the Malayan Law Journal. But this does not mean the book is merely a collection of unedited cases: cases from other jurisdictions where legal materials are more easily obtainable are edited, though not to such an extent of simplification that they become meaningless in the complex area of company law. The reason local cases are unedited, as the writer points out, is simply due to the lack of local materials which can help to define the legal principles involved. Reproducing the cases in full enables the practitioner to formulate his own propositions on the law, an approach which is much more fruitful.

At the same time, the author has also included short propositions of the principles of law involved at the beginning of each case, so as to enable the reader to determine very quickly whether or not the case is relevant to his research. The arrangement of the cases with the brief propositions of law at the beginning is done in a logical manner and this is further enhanced by the provision of a brief outline, at the beginning of each chapter, on the law involved and the statutes/sections of statutes applicable.

While the book is excellent overall, there are perhaps a few suggestions which the author might take into consideration when preparing the next edition.

¹ [1984] 2 M.L.J. 61 (The case is referred to in this edition at p. 358).

First, where the propositions of law stated in two cases are conflicting, the author could perhaps briefly comment on this at the end of the case. For example, the proposition of law stated in *Ng Chee Keong v. Ng Teong Kiat Highlands Plantations Ltd*² seems to conflict with that stated in *Re Lee Mah Realty Sdn. Bhd.*³ Reading through the cases would enable a reader to perhaps resolve this conflict himself but it would certainly be very helpful if the author, acknowledged as one of the local company law experts, could also comment. As it stands, some of the propositions are perhaps a bit brief and not very helpful in a complex area like company law.

Another minor point to be made is the fact that there is no table for the cases which are cited or applied in the various cases reproduced. While preparing such a table would be very time-consuming, it would certainly be very useful for a reader to know which cases, especially English and Australian, have been cited and accepted or rejected by the local courts. As it now stands, lawyers very often refer to English and/or other foreign cases without knowing if such cases have been applied/rejected by the local courts. A table citing cases already applied/rejected by the local courts would therefore be very useful to legal practitioners and students alike.

In conclusion, this is an excellent sourcebook which fills in a chronic gap in the local literature on company law and despite its price, would certainly seem to be good value for money.

² [1980] 1 M.L.J. 45 (The case is reproduced at p. 1104 of this edition).

³ [1980] 1 M.L.J. 115.