

DECISIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE: A DIGEST. By
J. J. G. Syatauw. [Leyden: Sythoff. 1962. 237 pp. D.fl.s. 16.50.]

There can be no doubt that from the point of view of teaching or of study, there can be no real substitute for the actual report of a judicial decision. Casebooks should serve to encourage the student to go to the original source, assist him in his revision, and come into their own when they make readily available reports which would otherwise be difficult to come by.

This is equally true of international as of municipal decisions. Where the former are concerned, the student coming to international law as a complete novice is often overwhelmed by the very weight of the material before him. In the case of the International Court of Justice he finds that judgments tend to be lengthy, that as many as ten of a bench of twelve may find it necessary to deliver separate opinions or comments, that *rationes decidendi* and *obiter dicta* tend to fall over each other, and he must be excused if he regards every statement as of equal worth.

It must also be borne in mind that, although the number of States resorting to the Court is small, the matters dealt with have been varied. Further, to send a student to just one volume of the *Reports* may leave the impression, particularly if the separate and dissenting opinions are discounted, that the output of the Court is less than it really is. To some extent Dr. Syatauw's digest of *Decisions of the International Court of Justice* remedies the situation. Here are to be found summaries of the facts and findings of every judgment and opinion of the World Court before July 1962, together with a short Anglo-French bibliography on each — unfortunately there is no bibliography of works on the Court or the totality of its achievement as such.

One can understand the Editor's decision to omit dissenting and separate opinions, for selection becomes invidious. Nevertheless, it is to be regretted that the reader receives no hint of the significance of, for example, the joint opinion of Basdevant, Winiarski, McNair and Read on membership in the United Nations; of the views of Azevedo or Read on asylum in Latin America; of McNair's analysis of trusteeship or ratification; of Lauterpacht on reservations to the Optional Clause and the significance of General Assembly resolutions; nor has he any hint of Alvarez's "new international law". Nevertheless, here the student will find a "pocket-book guide", if not to the work of the judges, to the majority decisions and opinions of the Court.

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