

FROM SHADOW TO LIGHT : A SOCIO-LEGAL APPROACH TO WORK  
ATMOSPHERE (1991). By Manik Kher. The Times Research Foundation,  
Pune. Pp. 142. Price Rs. 130.

SINCE INDEPENDENCE it is witnessed in India that there has been a gradual erosion of moral values, work-ethics because of the socio-economic and political developments. It is very essential, therefore, to investigate the growth and etiology of these changes and their impact on the industrial relations and work atmosphere in industries. The present book under review<sup>1</sup> purports to pin-point some of the causes and their impact on the work atmosphere in industries in India. The presentation and style is not in keeping with the kind of attractive title it tries to project. All the same some useful data about worker's militancy in India, three case studies of renowned industrial establishments reflecting the organisation of trade unions, their structure and internal management have been discussed.

The book has been divided into six small chapters including among others, (i) changing nature of industrial conflict; <sup>2</sup> (ii) workers' militancy in India;<sup>3</sup> and (iii) effective industrial democracy: alternative in the Indian context.<sup>4</sup> The author has not tried to delve deep into the issues and has dealt with the subject without indepth analysis and concern. The whole book has been presented purely in a hurried fashion and casual manner. In fact even the same material is sufficient, if presented properly, for writing just two good articles on the subject. But instead an attempt has been made to make it a book by using some modern printing facilities with bold letters and extra space in printing.

The first chapter dealing with sociology of legal change does mention some important events in the history of India like, (i) abolition of the *sati* system;<sup>5</sup> (ii) introduction of the Hindu Code;<sup>6</sup> and (iii) enactment of the Twenty-Fourth Amendment of the Constitution<sup>7</sup> in order to reflect the causes and motives to bring legal and sociological changes in India. This chapter covers even four important issues about the law as an instrumentality of social change and what role the judiciary should play in the Indian context.<sup>8</sup> However, treatment of the whole subject is very perfunctory and scanty without analysis of the issues and the real motivating analysis of the historical scene in depth which shows a superficial understanding of both the law and sociology on the part of the author.

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1. Manik Kher. *From Shadow to Light* (1991)
  2. *Id.*, ch. II.
  3. *Id.*, ch. III.
  4. *Id.*, ch. V.
  5. *Id.* at 5.
  6. *Id.* at 7.
  7. *Id.* at 9.
  8. *Id.* at 2.

The last chapter titled 'Looking Beyond'<sup>9</sup> does mention some important factors in the context of the subject like, (i) the managements in India will have no other option but to adopt sophisticated technology for achieving higher productivity;<sup>10</sup> (ii) the external trade union leadership may be forced to change its focus from the already organised industrial sector to those in the informal or unorganised sector of industries;<sup>11</sup> and (iii) under the law it should be compulsory to have a strike ballot before the workers can resort to strike.<sup>12</sup> However, these conclusions do not flow from the text or directly from the text of the book, but have been mentioned because of the general awareness and importance in this area. In passing it may also be pointed out that it would have been better to use statistical tables provided in the appendices as part of the text and the issues and causes properly analysed in more meaningful ways.

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9. *Id.*, ch. II.

10. *Id.* at 134.

11. *Id.* at 135.

12. *Id.* at 139.

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