

both. As it stands, I will try to persuade our library to purchase one collection this year and do the same again in the next financial year. The materials in both collections deserve to be widely used.

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Conflictos entre conciencia y ley: las objeciones de conciencia

RAFAEL NAVARRO-VALLS AND JAVIER MARTÍNEZ-TORRÓN

Iustel, Madrid, 2011, 514 pp (paperback €39.50) ISBN: 978-84-9890-134-4

This book, whose title translates as *Conflicts Between Conscience and Law: conscientious objection*, is a comprehensive analysis of a range of situations in which individual conscience is in stark conflict with the duties imposed by the law of the state or other public bodies. Professors Navarro-Valls and Martínez-Torrón published another book on this subject in 1997, but this is not a simple update; rather it is a much more detailed and thorough piece of work. The authors are to be commended for this, as their task was challenging and the outcome is extremely successful. Both authors had carried out a significant degree of research in the field and this comes across.

Over the last two decades interest in conscientious objection has grown year by year. In Spain there was a certain period of apathy towards the topic after compulsory military service ended in the late nineties, but in the last few years commentators have dealt extensively with the subject. As acknowledged by the authors, this is a topic that interests researchers in fields such as philosophy of law, constitutional law and ecclesiastical law of the state. More significantly, public opinion follows developments in this area with a huge degree of interest.

Although there has been earlier relevant research in this field, the work of both Professors from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, is innovative for a variety of reasons. First, in terms of contents, the book is ambitious, but at the same time, realistic. The first two chapters are general and they assist the reader to place the full range of conscientious objections in the relevant context. Chapter 1 focuses on the rationale of the chosen terminology, while chapter 2 is mainly, although not exclusively, an interesting sociological analysis that explains the need for a coherent legal response to an evolving society. Under these circumstances, the relationship between the majority population and minorities deserves special attention from legal commentators. Commendably, the authors have dealt with conscientious objection in a variety of circumstances,

including military service (chapter 3), fiscal obligations (chapter 4), abortion (chapter 5), the relationship between freedom of conscience and bioethics (chapter 6), medical treatments (chapter 7), conflicts on conscientious grounds in the educational sector (chapter 8), the controversy surrounding religious symbols (chapter 9), the employment field (chapter 10) and conscientious objection in the public sector (chapter 11). It seems clear that they have been adventurous and have not been afraid to focus, successfully, on topics that are highly controversial and socially contested. It is to be highlighted that both authors look extensively at the educational field, in which they have published widely, and the chapters on education and religious symbols are excellent contributions to an ongoing topic that has given rise to passionate debates throughout Europe. The book concludes with a chapter on confessional regimes, with a special emphasis on the English model, while highlighting the recent controversies regarding female bishops and practising homosexuals in the Church of England.

This book could be subject to criticism owing to the lack of consistency in the choice of countries discussed in each chapter, and it is true that the structure is not uniform. But this is a risk that the authors have run so as to provide the reader with the most relevant responses to each particular case. The result is a much better and nuanced choice than what might otherwise have been more homogeneous but also more artificial and less helpful.

Secondly, this book does not focus exclusively on Spain. On the contrary, both authors show an excellent knowledge and understanding of other jurisdictions and the comparative element is present throughout. They have chosen a wide range of jurisdictions in the different chapters, not only in Europe (for example, France, Germany and the UK), but also in North America (United States, Canada and Mexico) and other states such as India, Argentina and the Philippines. Furthermore, on some occasions (see chapters 2 and 6) the authors include the case law of the Court of Strasbourg and the decisions of the European Parliament, and show an in-depth knowledge of the legal framework of international organisations.

Thirdly, this book is predominantly based on case law and it includes decisions from both national courts and the European Court of Human Rights. Even though Spanish case law is a key part of this analysis, the reader will also attain very relevant information on rulings relating to other signatory states.

This book was an ambitious project and the authors must be congratulated on their very successful achievement. It will be an invaluable tool for all researchers with an interest in conscientious objection. Its interdisciplinary nature will make it an appealing source for political scientists, lawyers, historians, philosophers and sociologists. UK readers will find extensive material on British case law, and the very topical nature of the book, together with the conscientious

work carried out by Professors Navarro-Valls and Martínez-Torrón, makes this an attractive source beyond traditional academic circles.

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Sydney Anglicans and the Threat to World Anglicanism

MURIEL PORTER

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Dr Muriel Porter, of the Diocese of Melbourne, has been a member of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia since 1987 and of its Standing Committee since 1989. She does not like the Diocese of Sydney and her book explains why.

The Diocese of Sydney is militantly conservative evangelical: though it has women deacons, women are not ordained to the priesthood and the diocese espouses diaconal and lay presidency at the Eucharist. It also imposes strict standards of sexual conduct on its clergy – who ‘cannot be divorced, let alone remarried’ (p 75) – and it does not condone same-sex relationships at any price. Much of Dr Porter’s book is devoted to those issues in particular. She traces the history of the diocese in considerable detail, paying particular attention to the influence of Moore Theological College and of its long-serving principal, Broughton Knox. In particular, she takes issue with what Knox describes as ‘propositional revelation’ – that the proper attitude of the Christian believer is unquestioned obedience to what has been revealed in Scripture – and characterises it as ‘religious rationalism’ taken to the extreme (p 13). More generally, she is scathing about the involvement of the current archbishop, Dr Peter Jensen, in the Global Anglican Future Conference and the GAFCON Primates’ Council that resulted from it, both of which she regards – with considerable justification – as a destabilising influence on the Communion as a whole.

Perhaps of more interest for readers of this *Journal*, however, is the light that the book throws on the complex legal structure of the Anglican Church of Australia itself. The Church’s website describes the position like this:

Although the Anglican Church of Australia is one church its structure means that political control is vested in the dioceses and the parishes rather than held centrally by the General Synod ... [and that] ... the General Synod has very little power to make rules. Any rule involving a matter which could affect a diocese must be adopted by the dioceses.