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## A CENTRE FOR CENTRES!

The Review Committee which reported last year on the development of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies advocated the establishment within the Institute of five new research 'centres'. In the view of Professor Sir Roy Goode and his colleagues on the committee these new centres should be concerned with promoting and sustaining legal research of the highest calibre. However, it is widely recognised that in the short term, the prospects of finding the necessary resources for such a major development are slim! Indeed, even the Review Committee hesitated to suggest viable sources of funding. Furthermore, the Institute is concerned to ensure that any research or related activity that it designates as a 'centre' is both substantial and sustainable.

At present the Institute has an active Centre for Corporate Law and Practice, strengthened by the appointment of Professor Johan Henning as its new Director and although not constituted as a 'centre' the team that works under Professor Avrom Sherr, the Woolf Professor of Legal Education, was regarded by the Review Committee as a fine model. Our last editorial mentioned the appointment of Dr Kern Alexander of the University of Cambridge to head up another team focusing on financial regulation, with the generous support of Butterworths. We are optimistic that this stream of research activity will soon coalesce into another 'centre'. However, perhaps the most dramatic recent development has been the launch, on 17 July during the American Bar Association's London conference, of the Columbia Law School and IALS Research Centre. This Centre is based in the Institute and will accommodate several senior members of Columbia Law School's academic staff. (See page 13.)

The Sir William Dale Centre for Legislative Studies was established in 1996 on Sir William's ninetieth birthday. It has not proved easy to find a worthy successor to Sir William as Director of the Centre and we are therefore delighted that Mr Richard Nzerem has agreed to take the helm on an honorary basis. Richard has spent most of his career in the Legal Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat and recently retired as Director. He was involved in promoting the rule of law and in particular supporting legislative training throughout the Commonwealth.

With the establishment of a number of Visiting Senior Research Fellowships we are confident that the aspirations of Professor Goode and his colleagues are being met, on a time frame that they themselves would have considered optimistic. However, we do not intend to stop there. Securing sufficient funds to ensure that the Institute can maintain and develop its role in advanced research is a high priority in its current development strategy. While it is vital for the Institute to secure additional space for its library and other activities, we well recognise the significance of investment in people!

**Professor Barry A K Rider**