This chapter, which comments on the patent system, argues that while there is sufficient evidence to criticize the patent system, the mere fact that thousands of patents are granted annually suggests that all is not lost. Much of the law functions well and the time taken to grant a patent is a result of painstaking efforts to ensure that the invention fits in with the legal criteria. In so far as the patent system may be criticized, it is clearly having trouble getting to grips with ‘cutting edge’ issues, such as biotechnology, nanotechnology, and synthetic biology. The bottom line is that despite its imperfections, the patent system is a high-quality system involving detailed claims and their full examination.
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