

What a bumper!

NT police take note: The Australian recently reported the tale of a mother who alleges that, when the Fijian police were interrogating her son in relation to a robbery, they not only beat him but pushed a hot chilli into his rectum to make him confess.

Presumably, his friends now know what he meant when he said he had a hot date that night.

The Australian noted how appropriate it was that the complaint was being dealt with by the Police Force's internal affairs section.

Maybe it was a "bum rap". We could go on ... but we won't.

(Drover's Dog, Brief, The Law Society of Western Australia, July 1994)

'Time' story a killer

According to Time magazine, the Northern Territory is at the top end of Australia's crime statistics.

The NT's murder rate is more than six times the national average and the assault rate is 519 per 100,000, compared to the national figure of 115!

(The Gist, The Law Institute Journal, Law Institute of Victoria, August 1994)

Board game for serious players

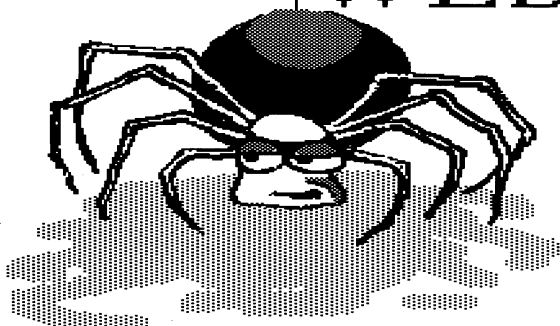
An English newspaper recently reported on the case of an Englishman who, after being convicted of murder, has been granted an appeal.

This follows claims that jury members at his trial used a ouija board to get in touch with his victims.

There may be a few local actions where this sort of evidence would be useful.

(Drover's Dog, Brief, The Law Society of Western Australia, July 1994)

THE SPIDER'S WEB



When time is money

American Lawyer reports that a North Carolina, US, bankruptcy attorney, Mark Kirby, billed his clients an average of almost 1,200 hours per month in 1990 and 1991.

Kirby's achievement is especially impressive given that there are only 744 hours in a month of 31 days.

Sadly, this high achiever's exceptional productivity has been brought to an end by Federal fraud charges.

(The Gist, The Law Institute Journal, Law Institute of Victoria, August 1994)

Something to cry over

Territory lawyers who think they have it tough should spare a thought for some of their counterparts in the Middle East.

A recent report in The Economist said:

"Police fired teargas into Cairo's Bar Association to stop Egyptian lawyers protesting at the death from torture of one of their colleagues.

"The government claims that he died in prison from asthma."

(Proctor, Queensland Law Society, July 1994)

When you're smiling ...

John Gacy, the multiple murderer executed in Illinois, US, in May, took nearly 20 minutes to die because of a clog in the tube which was to deliver the lethal injection, reports Time.

Opponents of capital punishment there say that of the 237 executions since the death penalty was reintroduced in 1976, 18 have been botched in some way. Meanwhile, the US Supreme Court was unmoved by an appeal from death row inmate Robert Drew, whose execution order was signed by a Houston judge who drew a happy face, or 'smiley', on the document, reports the ABA Journal.

Drew argued that drawing the happy face constituted cruel and unusual punishment, but the court accepted the judge's explanation that he always signed his name that way.

(The Gist, The Law Institute Journal, Law Institute of Victoria, August 1994)

Liability Laws — comments sought

The Law Society has recently received the Inquiry into the Law of Joint and Several Liability — Report of Stage One.

Australian National University Professor Jim Davis has prepared the report for the Federal and NSW Attorneys-General.

Law reforms in this area could have important implications, especially in the area of professional liability.

Comments on the report are welcome and should be provided by September 30 so they can be considered in the preparation of the final report, which is due to be completed by December.

For a copy of the report, call The Law Society on 81 5104 or Ian Govey (Principal Adviser, Business Law, the Federal Attorney-General's Department) on (06) 250 6317.