



**Using courtroom technology in the 21st century:
Professor Fred Lederer
QUT Faculty of Law
Thursday, 14 July 2005, 5:30pm
Introduction of guest speaker**

**The Hon P de Jersey AC,
Chief Justice**

I am very pleased to welcome you, ladies and gentlemen to this important public lecture.

Before coming to our distinguished guest speaker, I wish to commend the law school for its progressive initiative in provoking interest in areas of substantial topicality. The Supreme Court has been very pleased, for example, to be associated with the faculty's important "courts for the 21st century" seminars: the privacy seminar two years ago attracted national interest, followed by the information management conference last year, and the relation between technology and access later this year.

This evening's subject goes to the heart of the contemporary relevance of our courts of law. It is unsurprising QUT should have grasped this nettle. The law school, after all, some years ago now, presented its students with the stunningly advanced technology of the moot court.

The full exploitation of up-to-date technology should be distinguishing the courts of law of the 21st century. The resultant efficiencies in presentation, comprehension and adjudication should not be underestimated.

The new Magistrates Courthouse here in Brisbane provides some good examples of technological aids. Regrettably in the Supreme and District Courts, we are hampered by structures which render the introduction of really challenging technology, prohibitively expensive: I am confident that will change sooner rather than later.

We are by the way grateful to Mr Tony Grant Taylor, in Tuesday's "City Beat" column in the Courier-Mail, for publicizing this evening's lecture. I thought him a tad unkind in his reference to the *Ensham* case being run by Mr Justice Chesterman, with the journalist



**Using courtroom technology in the 21st century:
Professor Fred Lederer
QUT Faculty of Law
Thursday, 14 July 2005, 5:30pm
Introduction of guest speaker**

claiming a paperless courtroom is, in Queensland, “as far away as a manned Mars landing”. The *Ensham* trial in fact illustrates an efficient combination of paper and electronics. The parties share for example an electronic database from which relevant documents can be printed out in court on demand, and I gather both the parties and the court are satisfied with the efficiency of the process.

But of course we still yearn for the capacity to present litigants, especially commercial litigants, with the sort of facilities which in their offices they take for granted.

Professor Lederer, welcome to Queensland. We are grateful to have you inform, interest and challenge us. The Courtroom 21 project dates from 1993, a joint project of the College of William and Mary’s Law School and the National Center for State Courts. This is presented as the world’s most technologically advanced trial and appellate courtroom. Judges from our Supreme Court, having visited Courtroom 21, have on their return glowingly endorsed that assessment.

Professor Lederer is Chancellor Professor of Law and Director of Courtroom 21 at the College of William and Mary’s School of Law. He is academically very highly qualified, a prolific author, and I am sure, a captivating educator. We are greatly privileged to have the opportunity to hear, this evening, from one of the very few people in the world who really do stand at the leading edge of courtroom technology, and actually comprehend it.

Ladies and gentlemen, Professor Lederer...