

'Bastardisation' under fire

By DAVID MCKNIGHT

A scientific meeting of forensic psychiatrists in Hobart last weekend coincided with an attack by a court psychologist on Duntroon, the Army's top training school.

Tim Watson-Munro, who treated Hoddle Street killer Julian Knight, said that even though Knight was responsible for his actions, Duntroon's notorious "bastardisation" process made a big contribution to his state of mind.

"Knight suffered continued bastardisation by the more senior cadets, which Knight said was because he did not come from a private school background," the psychologist said.

"It was relentless. By this I mean he was constantly singled out for victimisation, which included assaults and acts of forced subordination."

Forensic psychiatrists played a key role in determining Knight's state of mind during the massacre.

Meanwhile, in Hobart, their conference discussed the history of their profession, among other things.

Dr Neville Parker, a Melbourne psychiatrist, argued that his colleagues should learn from phrenology — the study of bumps on the head once said to reveal character.

Phrenology was once accepted as scientifically proven — just as modern psychiatry is accepted today.

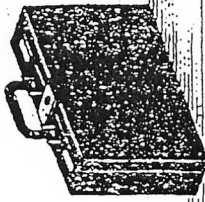
The lesson, he said, was that psychiatrists should not be so smug.

In Australia, phrenology was given great credibility by John de Villie, who "read the heads" of 148 convicts being transported in 1826.

Engineers: a case of snobbery and status?

Are Australia's professional engineers guilty of "gross professional snobbery"?

The Institution of Engineers Aus-



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tralia (IEA) has just concluded a ballot of its members on whether to admit "para-professionals" — engineers who have completed a two-year diploma rather than university training.

The result? Two-thirds said no, much to the chagrin of the Institute of Engineering Associates, who hope to amalgamate with the IEA.

But some professional engineers accuse their recalcitrant colleagues of "gross professional snobbery".

Not surprising, when the "no" case argued that the move would undermine "the intellectual level of the papers presented to the institution in learned society forums".

Fears have also been expressed that the grubby para-professionals might take over the institution.

The institution leadership has decided not to pursue the matter but to set up a working party to report next April.

Barristers chuckle at

Gleeson's grim humour

The subculture of the Sydney Bar has many quirks but no-one could accuse it of lacking humour.

The elevation of Murray Gleeson, QC, to Chief Justice of NSW brought an outbreak of humour, including from "Smiler" himself.

Bar News noted rumours that he intended to renovate the Chief Justice's garden in St James Road to



Julian Knight . . . constantly singled out for victimisation by senior cadets because of his school background.

"install a fish pond inhabited by his favourite fish — the piranha". "Smiler" Gleeson commented that the rumours were "partially unfounded".

Those who have faced his grim visage and vigorous questioning across the dock may also appreciate his black humour when asked what kind of court he would run.

"Relaxed. Friendly. A cosy place in which a just solution to people's problems can be sorted out as the result of a quiet chat between Bench and Bar," he revealed.

Home truths

about marijuana

A study on drugs by multinational consultants Peat Marwick Hungerford discovered some home truths about the weed *Cannabis sativa*.

Commissioned by the Youth Bureau of the Federal Department of Education, the consultants said that policies on drugs should relate to their harmfulness, not to their age from 18 to 20.

"In practice, cannabis policies have been controversial for some time because of the differences between harm as perceived by the community (including many political leaders) and harm as perceived by a large proportion of the population using cannabis," the report stated.

"Cannabis users are aware of the fact that evidence for the view that cannabis consumption is, in all probability or even likelihood, associated with a high degree of hazard cannot be sustained scientifically."

The report concluded that on the basis of scientific evidence and the experience of the many cannabis users, "the degree of severity of penalties relating to cannabis are not warranted by the evidence of harm".

However, the report recommends that alcohol and tobacco consumption should be reduced among young people and emphasises the need to examine lifting the minimum drinking age from 18 to 20.