



William Scorse

Bogus bomber jailed

By PHILIP CULLEN

A MAN was yesterday jailed for at least two years for threatening to blow up a hospital maternity ward.

The County Court heard William John Scorse, 20, held four nurses and another female hostage at knifepoint in Rosebud Hospital and threatened to kill them by detonating a fake bomb strapped to his chest on January 20 this year.

The court heard Scorse blamed a doctor at the hospital for the miscarriage of his child on that day two years earlier.

Scorse threw the fake bomb to the floor and confessed it wasn't real after about 15 minutes and surrendered to police.

Scorse, a father of two from Rosebud, pleaded guilty to five counts of false imprisonment and one count each of making a bomb hoax, making a threat to kill and assault.

Judge Thomas Neesham yesterday jailed Scorse to 5½ years with a minimum term of two years.

Pizza a health food

A STUDY has revealed eating pizza regularly could help stave off certain forms of cancer.

According to the study of 8000 Italians' eating habits carried out by the Pharmacology Institute in Milan, the risks of getting mouth, oesophageal or colon cancer plunged by as much as 34 per cent, 59 per cent and 26 per cent respectively.

The secret, according to Silvano Gallus who led the research, appeared to be connected to the preventive properties of the humble tomato.

"We knew that tomato sauce could offer protection against certain tumours, but we did not expect pizza as a complete meal also to offer such protective powers," he said.

However, a warning was sounded by epidemiologist Carlo La Vecchia: "There is nothing to indicate pizza is the only thing responsible," he said.

Cycle of his life

A FATHER from China has fulfilled his 10-year-old son's dying wish by pedalling him 2000km to Beijing in a pedicab to see Tiananmen Square.

Huang Xiaoyong, 44, spent 62 days with son Huang Ge travelling from Hunan province to the capital in a converted bicycle with a two-seat carriage in the back.

Baby's plunge to floor costs \$30,000



Distressed: Maree Day and son Dylan, now 3, yesterday. Picture: BILL MCAULEY

A WOMAN whose four-day-old son fell to the floor of a hospital nursery has received \$30,000 compensation for mental shock.

Dylan Day, now three, suffered a fractured skull and internal bleeding after falling 1.5m while being cared for at the Royal Women's Hospital.

His mother, Maree, sued the hospital for mental shock and post-traumatic stress after she arrived at the ward and saw Dylan in his incubator distressed and crying while surrounded by nurses.

Staff told Mrs Day that Dylan, born five weeks premature, had kicked

open the door of the incubator and fallen to the floor — an explanation she still refuses to believe.

"How could a four-day-old baby do that?" she asked.

A spokeswoman for the hospital yesterday said the "freak incident" was caused by a phototherapy lamp, used to treat babies with jaundice, that was placed next to the incubator.

When the lamp received the slightest touch it activated the incubator's porthole latch, springing the door open.

Mrs Day yesterday settled her lawsuit with the hospital and wants her experience to serve as a warning to other expectant mothers.

She received \$30,000 compensation in the settlement but she has issued a separate writ on behalf of Dylan, whose

By JEREMY KELLY

long-term prognosis is like a time bomb.

Doctors are unable to say whether he suffered brain damage from the May 2000 fall and will only know when he has reached teenage years.

Mrs Day describes the waiting time as traumatic.

"It's a waiting game and each day I just pray to God that he is OK," she said.

"He is doing great so far, but (doctors) are scared he might develop slower than other kids."

Mrs Day says the incident destroyed any trust she had in people looking after Dylan and his nine-month-old brother Eren. Her lawyer, Lee Flanagan of Arnold, Thomas & Becker, said

Dylan's lawsuit against the hospital was filed before the looming deadline passed for the Bracks Government's legislative changes to personal injury claims.

Mr Flanagan said that under the new system, whereby litigants have to pass threshold tests for physical and psychological injuries, Dylan might be prevented from suing the hospital.

Royal Women's Hospital spokeswoman Kerry Watson said the hospital understood "how upsetting this unfortunate and extremely rare incident must have been to Ms Day and her family".

"The hospital immediately took steps to make sure this can never happen again," Ms Watson said.

‘It's a waiting game and each day I pray to God he is OK’

Lawyer queries officer

FEDERAL Employment Minister Tony Abbott contacted witnesses involved in the One Nation electoral fraud trial, a court heard yesterday.

Det-Sgt Graham Newton told the Brisbane court in evidence he had heard "different things" about Mr Abbott, but had not investigated them.

Former party co-founders Pauline Hanson and David Ettridge are facing electoral fraud charges in the Queensland District Court.

Asked by Ms Hanson's lawyer, Chris Nyst, if he was aware Mr Abbott had contacted key witnesses in the case, Det-Sgt Newton said he was not sure.

Det-Sgt Newton admitted Mr Abbott's name had "popped up" during his 21-month fraud investigation.

Mr Nyst told the court Mr Abbott had written to Queensland Electoral Commissioner Des O'Shea over concerns with the One Nation party struc-



Pauline Hanson

ture and urging him not to pay Ms Hanson any electoral funding.

Det-Sgt Newton denied being under political pressure to charge the One Nation pair.

"There were no instructions filtering from above, as if it was something sinister," Det-Sgt Newton told the court.

Ms Hanson, 49, and Mr Ettridge, 58, have pleaded not guilty to fraudulently registering One Nation in Queensland on December 4, 1997, by misrepresenting members of a support movement as party members.

Ms Hanson has pleaded not guilty to two further charges, of dishonestly obtaining \$498,637 in electoral reimbursements on September 2 and 25, 1998, after the Queensland election that year.

The trial continues.

Rort attacks a ruse, says Clark

By MARK PHILLIPS

ATSIC chairman Geoff Clark yesterday accused his enemies of using travel rorts claims to hide their own inaction on indigenous issues.

Mr Clark emphatically refused to stand down as boss of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission as the axe hangs above his head.

Mr Clark must show cause why he should not be removed from office for misleading Indigenous Affairs Minister Philip Ruddock and bringing ATSIC into disrepute.

Mr Ruddock wrote to Mr Clark last week seeking explanations about a \$31,000 trip to Ireland by Mr Clark and his wife, and his conviction over a pub brawl.

The deadline for his response was yesterday, but Mr Clark has been granted an extension by Mr Ruddock, who is overseas.

Mr Clark said yesterday he believed his response



Geoff Clark

would satisfy Mr Ruddock on both matters.

He claimed the attacks on him were a diversion.

"I believe that the allegations of travel rorts against myself and other ATSIC commissioners is a beat-up and a smoke screen from inaction on the issues of Aboriginal reconciliation, native title and lack of response to the domestic violence agenda in this country," Mr Clark said on ABC radio.

Mr Clark said that he was entitled to travel to

international forums to represent indigenous Australians.

"I've been twice elected in this country by Aboriginal people and I have been a vigorous defender of their rights at these particular forums," he said.

"Maybe that is the issue that is being questioned."

A spokesman for Mr Ruddock said he could not respond because the minister had not seen Mr Clark's comments.

If Mr Ruddock is not satisfied with Mr Clark's answers to his show-cause notice, he will first suspend Mr Clark and then move to sack him.

Dismissal could be overturned in Parliament, but Labor has indicated it would not oppose it as long as Mr Clark is given due process.

Mr Clark has not been invited to a summit of Aboriginal leaders to be hosted by Prime Minister John Howard in Canberra tomorrow to tackle domestic violence.

Sugar blames politics

FORMER ATSIC deputy chairman "Sugar" Ray Robinson claimed yesterday a political witchhunt was costing his indigenous community much-needed funding.

Mr Robinson, 57, stepped down from the second top job in Aboriginal politics last month after being charged with misuse of taxpayer funds.

He said he was the victim of "a deliberate vilification of me and a campaign against me by my political opponents".

Mr Robinson is facing charges of forging two cheques worth \$4800 belonging to the Indigenous Housing Corporation.

His solicitor Terry O'Gorman said outside Brisbane Magistrates' Court yesterday the prosecution would be dropping the forgery charges.

"Some other charges will be preferred, but that's all we can say until a later time," he said.

The case returns to the same court on Thursday.