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Breaking News....

This page is updated on a weekly basis.

Week Beginning 22/11/2004

QUEEN'S SPEECH BEARS OUT LAW SOCIETY'S 'WORST FEARS':

The Law Society has slammed government plans to set up an FBI-style crime fighting agency, saying the move has borne out its 'worst fears'. The organisation says it fears police will be able to arrest people for all offences, not just those carrying custodial sentences as at present, or even for refusing to give their name and address, after a shake-up announced in the Queen's Speech.

The Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill is to bring about a radical shake-up of the organisations and powers to fight major crime. It will also overhaul the powers of police officers contained in the *Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984*, extend the powers of community support officers and create a new offence of religious hatred. The bill is also likely to include a new 'super-warrant' that can be used more than once and targets offenders with more than one address.

Law Society chief executive Janet Paraskeva rapped the proposed legislation, saying that giving police the power to arrest, no matter how minor the suspected offence, would disrupt the balance between civil liberties and police needs. She said: 'This raises serious questions of police accountability and effective judicial oversight. The warrant weakens judicial control over the exercise of a very serious interference with the rights of the citizen, and appears intended to apply to every property in relation to which a suspect would have rights of occupation, control, or even access.'

She added: 'The government is in serious danger of overstating the threat to public order and national security and bringing in Draconian new laws which will take away centuries of hard won rights. Taken together with other plans to tackle terrorism and law and order, we fear that they are taking a serious step in the direction of a police state.'



LOVELLS PICKS HARRIS:

Lovells has elected capital markets specialist David Harris to take over from Lesley MacDonagh as managing partner. Harris will take office on 1 May 2005, and MacDonagh will stay on for a handover period. MacDonagh announced in August 2003 that she would not stand again, after being re-elected unopposed three times since she took office on 1 May 1995.

Harris commented: 'These are challenging times in which to take on responsibility for a firm of our size and reputation. To continue our progress in the market we need to take bold decisions on strategic matters such as the shape of our presence around the globe. We must also deal swiftly and effectively with the many issues which confront major international businesses every day.

'This is a demanding combination, as I appreciate from my experience running our finance practice. It is important to retain a practitioner's 'feel' for what attracts new clients, business and talent for the firm. Only by remaining close to your colleagues and their concerns, Identifying common ground and facilitating appropriate support, can you exact their commitment to perform at their best. I am determined to achieve this, so we can deliver the highest quality service to our clients.'

LAW FIRMS MUST BOOST DIVERSITY - LAMMY:

City law firms should do more to boost diversity and stop favouring Oxbridge graduates, Minister for Constitutional Affairs David Lammy has said. In a speech to the standing conference on legal education this week, he said that women and ethnic minorities are penetrating the legal profession very slowly.

'What are the big law firms and chambers doing to ensure they have a more diverse make-up?' asked Lammy. 'It is not enough to import diversity from overseas, or sit back and hope that the problem will fix itself. If those

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with the resources at their disposal can't lead the way, how can we expect others to?' He noted that 78% of Oxbridge students have their fees paid by a professional sponsor, compared to 27% from new universities, according to government data. 'Is it any wonder then, that students who achieve excellent results but go to a new university don't succeed when firms do not sponsor them?' said Lammy.

CHRISTMAS TIME, MISTLETOE AND WINE, HARBOTTLE & LEWIS SINGING CHRISTIAN RHYMES...?



Media law maestros **Harbottle & Lewis** have released a charity CD with a difference. All the tracks – including *Fairytale of New York*, *Santa Baby* and *There Must Be an Angel* – have been created and produced by the firm's partners, lawyers, support staff and families. For example, TV law star Medwyn Jones becomes a star of a different kind when he sings the male lead of *Fairytale of New York*, the solo last verse of *A Very Good Year* and the tenor parts of *The Christmas Song* and *My Sweet Lord*.

Trainee lawyer and jazz singer Fiona Campbell came up with the idea to release a charity CD, and the rest of Harbottle & Lewis – all frustrated singers, actors and film stars – joined in, bringing their families with them to produce the creative effort.

The musical extravaganza is in aid of children's charity Kids Company, which supports children with severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties resulting from significant childhood trauma and/or neglect. Many of these children live in chronic deprivation caused by extreme poverty, and have no responsible adults in their lives. Kids Company aims to identify these children's problems and build a tailor-made package of support. For track samples and to buy the CD online, visit www.harmonyandlight.com.

Harbottles are not the only ones to cash in on the market for legal Christmas music – www.lawtunes.com, 'The Musical Scales of Justice', have released 'comedy' lawyer-themed festive CDs *Legal Holiday* and *The Lawyer's Holiday Humour Album*. Featuring such classic tunes as *Rainmaker Reindeer*, *Let 'Em Sue* (to the tune of *Let It Snow*) and *Santa And I Are Gonna Pull An All-Nighter On Christmas*, these CDs are produced by New York litigator Lawrence Savell. Who arguably should have known better...

News for Week Beginning

November 2004	22/11/2004	15/11/2004	08/11/2004	01/11/2004
October 2004		25/10/2004	18/10/2004	04/10/2004
September 2004		27/09/2004	13/09/2004	06/09/2004
August 2004				02/08/2004
July 2004			26/07/2004	19/07/2004
June 2004	28/06/2004	21/06/2004	14/06/2004	07/06/2004
May 2004	17/05/2004	17/05/2004	10/05/2004	03/05/2004
April 2004	26/04/2004	19/04/2004	12/04/2004	05/04/2004
March 2004				29/03/2004
March 2004	22/03/2004	15/03/2004	08/03/2004	01/03/2004
February 2004	23/02/2004	16/02/2004	09/02/2004	02/02/2004
January 2004	26/01/2004	19/01/2004	12/01/2004	05/01/2004
December	-	15/12/2003	08/12/2003	01/12/2003
November	24/11/2003	17/11/2003	10/11/2003	03/11/2003
October	27/10/2003	20/10/2003	13/10/2003	06/10/2003
September	29/09/2003	15/09/2003	08/09/2003	01/09/2003
August	27/08/2003	18/08/2003	11/08/2003	04/08/2003
July	28/07/2003	22/07/2003	14/07/2003	07/07/2003
June	30/06/2003	23/06/2003	16/06/2003	-

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