

New Weapon for Cyprus?

With nations spending billions of dollars on armaments throughout the world, the 16th Australian Police Contingent in Cyprus has introduced a new 'weapon' to the United Nations arsenal.

The humble boomerang was recently put on trial before representatives of eleven countries who form the nucleus of the Cyprus Peace Keeping Force.

Following the trials the consensus of opinion was that its erratic behaviour precluded it from a military role, but proved highly efficient for dispersing crowds.

Boomerang throwing was introduced by Sergeant Ben Blakeney of AUSTCIVPOL, the first Aboriginal policeman to serve in Cyprus.

Demonstrations and boomerang throwing competitions have been conducted at most of UNFICYP's military camps. AUSTCIVPOL so far remain the unbeaten favourites; they do have the advantage.

After a recent competition with 'B' squadron of the Queen's Royal Irish Hussars, a member of their team was heard to comment: "It is easy to understand why the kangaroo population is on the increase. If you had to rely on hunting with a boomerang you would soon go hungry or become a vegetarian."

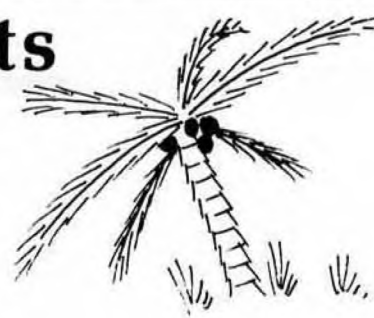
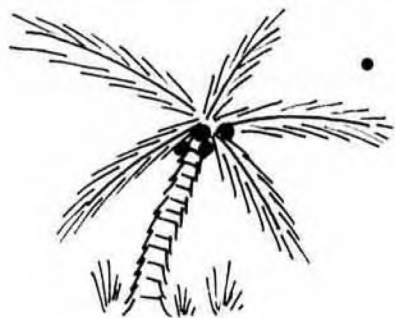


Sergeant Ben Blakeney, AUSTCIVPOL, stationed in Cyprus, shows the United Nations Peace Keeping Force Commander, Major General J.J. Quinn, the correct way to throw a boomerang.



Sergeant Ben Blakeney of AUSTCIVPOL, who is the first Aboriginal Policeman to serve in Cyprus, shows the children of Nicosia Primary School the art of playing the didgeridoo. There was no shortage of volunteers—even the teachers had a turn!

... not all coconuts and palm trees for this cop



Life as a policeman can be traumatic, even when you are stationed on a lazy sun-drenched island in the middle of the Indian Ocean. Just ask Inspector Claude Verrier who has spent the past 29 years of his police career in the Mauritius Police Force on Mauritius. Inspector Verrier, who recently visited Canberra while on six weeks holiday in Australia, had just experienced one of the

worst cyclone seasons in the island's history. No less than 12 cyclones have battered Mauritius Island since Christmas, most of them generating their devastating power just off the West Australian coast.

Mauritius Island is a six-hour flight west of Perth and has a multi-racial population of 900,000 including 4000 policemen. The island was granted independence in 1968. Ins-

pector Verrier was on a courtesy visit to see Assistant Commissioner Watt, the two men having met late last year on a brief stopover during Prime Minister Fraser's trip to Lusaka.

Inspector Verrier, whose native tongue is French, was escorted during his Canberra stay by AFP member Senior Sergeant John Vincent, who also speaks French.