

Why Darwin Survived

George Wright

Last year, unverified rumour says that North Korea's Supreme Leader ordered a nuclear strike on Darwin because he figured that Australia's response would at best, be with boomerangs. Unfortunately, the missile dropped into the Java Trench in Indonesian territory. It sank deep to the earth's mantle without exploding.

America's defence forces had prepared for the possibility of a nuclear strike by developing a missile-defence system controlled by a Pentagon super-computer.

But they overlooked one vital link—The Whitehouse. The President demanded power to initiate nuclear strikes himself. This required a computer link. Unfortunately there was no room for another modem in the computer room.

'*Fix it*', said the President. The instruction filtered down to Sparkie, who found an apparently vacant office next to the computer facilities and he drilled a hole one inch in diameter into both the common wall and into the computer box to enable a cable-link between a new modem and the motherboard of the computer. This size subsequently proved to be an over-estimate for the small-diameter cable supplied. No worries. He simply fitted it.

Living in that otherwise vacant office was Fred, a small brown mouse who subsequently explored Sparkie's large holes. Fred found the innards of the computer warm and safe, so he relocated.

Fred could curl up comfortably around a three-volt button-sized battery named CR2032. Although not powerful it had the capacity to keep the computer systems safe if there was a power disruption. If you want a technical explanation, Sparkie would tell you: '*it maintains the BIOS*'.

Unfortunately, just before the Supreme Leader ordered the missile launch, Fred accidentally dislodged CR2032 while scratching an itchy ear. Then the World Series Baseball Championship finished and everybody in Washington simultaneously went to the toilet causing a power outage. The BIOS failed along with the missile defence system.

Making Australia safe from nuclear attack were foiled by a mouse named Fred, a battery valued at fifty cents and American incontinence.