

Police Expanding Spray-Can Arsenal

By DAVID BURNHAM

The New York Police Department has equipped about 300 of its men with an incapacitating spray gun called the Federal Streamer.

The Streamer—said to have an effect somewhat similar to the widely publicized Chemical Mace—has been issued to about 10 per cent of the 3,000 men assigned to the Safety and Emergency Division and the Tactical Patrol Force, according to Jacques Nevard, Deputy Police Commissioner for Press Relations.

Mr. Nevard said, however, that all the men in these two rapid-response units had received training in the use of the spray gun.

The Federal Streamer is about six inches long and about an inch and a half in diameter, containing nine-tenths to 1 per cent of standard tear gas under pressure in a freon solvent. It will shoot about 60 one-second spurts of spray from 15 to 20 feet.

Vernon L. Maury, marketing manager for the manufacturer, Federal Laboratories, Saltsburg, Pa., said one spurt would cause intense stinging sensation and a heavy flow of tears.

Mr. Maury said the Streamer was presently used by "thousands of police departments around the country" primarily

for "sudden-violence situations such as a battle between a husband and a wife or a violent drunk in a bar."

He said the spray was useful "in the situation where a policeman doesn't want to use his pistol or nightstick and doesn't want to grapple with the offender."

Mr. Nevard said the Police Department had tested the Streamer on volunteers on the police range at Rodman's Neck in the Bronx and in limited field tests during the last year. He said it had been found "an effective alternative to other weapons that does not cause permanent harm to human beings."

He said policemen receiving training had been instructed that the Streamer "might be used at the discretion of the officer in situation where law would permit him to use his night stick or pistol."

Mr. Nevard also said that the policemen had been instructed to let persons hit with the Streamer wash their faces as soon as possible.

Mr. Maury, who asserted that Federal Laboratories is the world's largest manufacturer of tear-gas products, said

tear gas was immediately washed from the eyes by the flow of tears. He said the only possible danger from the Streamer was minor blistering

if a person tried to treat the burning sensation with oil or grease.

"The proper treatment is to flush with water or water and baking soda," he said.

Mr. Nevard's announcement that the department had equipped some of its men with the Federal Streamer was made after he was asked about an earlier statement by a high police official that the police had a small amount of the Chemical Mace on hand, but that "as far as I know it has not been given to any operational unit."

Mr. Nevard said the statement by Assistant Chief Inspector George P. McManus, made at a police seminar sponsored by the Association of American Railroads, had been made in response to a question about Chemical Mace, and not spray guns in general.

Other points made by Chief McManus in his talk included:

☛The New York Police Department has developed detailed "riot maps"—including topography, access and escape routes, potential mobilization points and liquor and gun stores—for about 100 areas in the city.

☛The department has developed a mobilization plan that permits it to mass a demonstration control force of about 200 policemen in any part of the city in about 25 minutes.