

Eye Damage

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Doctor's Attack on Mace

Mace, the chemical spray that is gaining in popularity among law-enforcement agencies, can cause extensive, permanent eye damage, a San Francisco doctor charged yesterday.

Dr. Lawrence Rose, an ophthalmologist, said he found out from the Public Health Service that Mace is about 5 per cent chloroacetophenone, a concentrated tear gas, and 95 per cent 1-1-1 trichloroethane, which has been used as an industrial solvent.

At a press conference at the Good Samaritan Episcopal Church yesterday, Rose also said a suit may be brought against the San Francisco Police Department to stop the use of Mace.

Rose said that experiments he performed by shooting Mace into the eyes of rabbits confirmed reports in medical literature that the chemical can cause permanent eye damage.

Rose disagreed with the contention of police that Mace is a "humane" weapon.

While the tear gas can cause permanent scarring of the eye's cornea, the trichloroethane can cause second-degree burns and has pronounced toxic effects on the central nervous system, he said.

Rose, who was joined at the press conference by two internes, Drs. Jay Flocks and Donald Goldmacher, said the press conference was being held under the

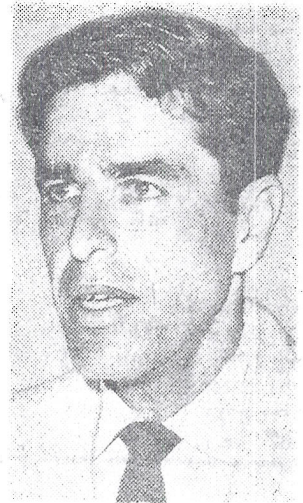
aegis of the Medical Committee for Human Rights.

Flocks related two cases in an Alameda county emergency ward in which he was unable to treat lacerations and burns because the Mace on the skin and clothing made it impossible to get near two victims for a half hour.

Rose said he was appalled that the manufacturer of Mace, the General Ordnance Equipment Corp. of Pittsburgh, had not even answered his requests for information on the chemical.

He charged police with "indiscriminately using a toxic drug" and added, "There is enough evidence for police to cease and desist its use until safety tests are completed."

He said he had discussed



DR. LAWRENCE ROSE
A medical concern

the dangers of Mace with Police Chief Thomas Cahill last June and again this month.

He quoted Cahill as saying Mace was more humane than a billy club.