

POLICE IN SECRET TESTS OF GIANT 'PEPPER FOGGER'

By PETER ALLEN

Police in Sydney are carrying out secret experiments on a highly controversial "pepper fogger", one of the world's most potent riot control devices.

Existence of the machine in Sydney, was revealed by a special "Sun-Herald" investigation this week.

The "pepper fogger," a huge blower powered by a jet engine, could blanket an entire city block with tear or nausea gas within minutes.

Arms experts said the machine appeared to have no application in Australia, either now or in the foreseeable future.

The special investigation followed litter complaints over lavish spending on the elite 30-man Police Emergency Squad, which is testing the fogging machine.

Critics within the force claimed that the squad — formerly known as the Riot Squad — had already "wasted" tens of thousands of dollars training for emergencies worse than those existing in strife-torn Belfast.

They criticised the build-up of arms within the Emergency Squad at the expense of other sections of the force.

The investigation revealed that the squad has at its disposal enough equipment to quell a major uprising.



Vic MP talks to Pope

ROME, Saturday. — Pope Paul VI (pictured) was non-committal about the prospect for his visiting Melbourne for the International Eucharistic Congress next February when he met the Australian Minister for Labour, Mr Lynch, at the Vatican today.

Informed sources said when Mr Lynch raised the possibility of a Papal visit to Australia, the Pope did not rule out the idea, but said a decision would depend on many factors.

The Australian Roman Catholic hierarchy has been trying for some time to persuade the Pope to come to Melbourne for the congress, from February 18 to 25.

Father Brian Walsh, executive director of the congress, said here last March that the Pope had attended two eucharistic congresses — in Bombay in 1964 and in Bogota in 1968.

ARMY ASSAULT RIFLES

I was told that in the course of a year, the squad members are firing off tens of thousands of rounds of ammunition in practice.

Among its reserves are said to be 500 canisters of CS tear gas — enough to cover 100 city blocks.

It also has an undisclosed number of the older type CN tear gas canisters as well as 250 cans of the latest nausea-inducing mace gas.

Devices the squad is known to be investigating include an infrared night vision system and a sophisticated "bugging" system capable of picking up conversations inside buildings half a mile away.

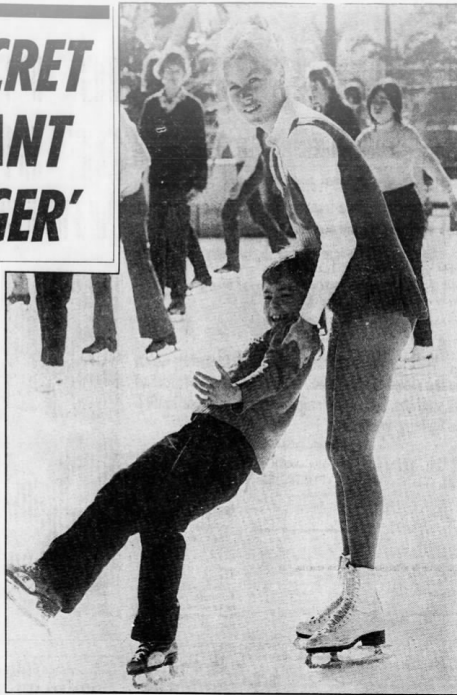
Estimates of the total amount already spent and about to be spent on the 30-man squad are as high as \$250,000.

Some police sources believe that a "fair slice" of \$350,000 earmarked for a State-wide police arms re-equipment program will go to the squad.

Each member of the squad has his own car or special vehicle.

Locked inside a box in the cars are tear gas, army assault rifles and other riot equipment.

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Instructor Mette Haslev, of Warnawee, saves Jane Chorley, of Botany, from a fall on the ice at Prince Alfred Park yesterday. Mette is a Norwegian and is now living in Australia.

\$413,100 land auction

Home-hunters paid out a total of \$413,100 for 22 sites in East Killara yesterday.

Top price paid at the Crown Lands auction was \$26,100.

And the lowest pay out for land between Walar Crescent and Murrumbidgee was \$16,000.

Only two sites did not bring bids from the 180 people at the sale.

The reserve prices for the 24 sites ranged from \$14,500 to \$21,000.

At an earlier sale near the same spot last month, a total of 18 lots sold for \$316,000.

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\$100,000 MORPHINE CHARGE

A 20-year-old New Zealand woolclasser appeared in Manly Court of Petty Sessions yesterday on charges involving pure morphine which police estimated to be worth about \$100,000.

Mr D. Currey, SM, remanded him to Monday without bail.

Stuart William Boyle, of The Modern Hotel, Penang, Malaysia, was charged with the importing, possessing and selling of morphine.

He was also charged with being custody of \$540 that was reasonably suspected of being stolen or unlawfully obtained, and possessing the drug Indian Hemp.

The Acting Police Prosecutor, Sergeant J. Gardner, alleged Boyle arrived in Australia about a week ago from Malaysia.

And had made arrangements with a friend in Malaysia to post the morphine to him when he arrived.

It was also alleged that Boyle sold some of the morphine which weighed more than 1lb, in Manly on June 17 this year.

The \$540 found in Boyle's

custody was alleged to have been the proceeds of the sale.

Sergeant Gardner said Boyle had admitted that he was addicted to drugs.

Mr Currey asked the sergeant the value of the drug on the black market.

Sergeant Gardner: \$100,000, sir.

Mr Currey: "In the circumstances, I will have to refuse bail due to the nature of the

charges and the amount of money and drugs involved."

Boyle: I think the value is wrong. I think its value is about \$8,000.

Mr Currey: Do you agree the quantity is one pound of pure morphine?

Boyle: No.

Mr Currey: \$8,000 worth is still a lot of drugs.

Boyle was refused bail on the importation charge. Bail was not required on the other matters.