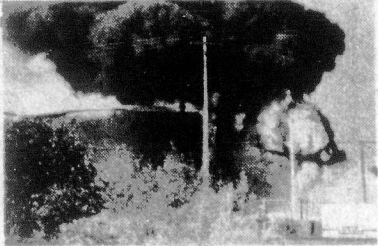


Inferno at 2 a.m.

By JOHN STEWART
Times Staff Writer

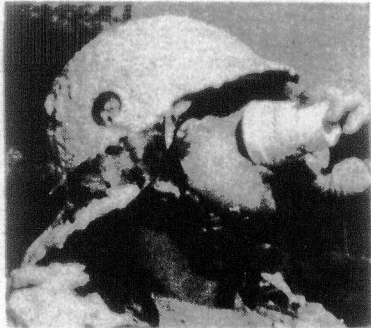
"I don't like it no more here."
John Bay stood in the driveway of his home at 1181 Kane Rd. Monday morning and watched the flames flare



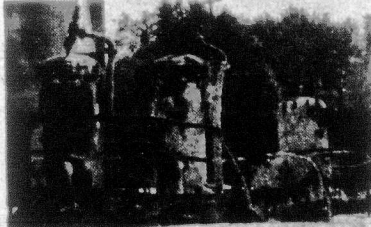
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200 feet into the air from the blaze at the Texaco refinery.

Bay's English may not have been too good, but his meaning was abundantly clear: he wasn't happy about having to rush from his home at about 2 a.m. in a panic when fire broke out among a myriad of pipes feeding a 65,000 barrel fuel oil tank.

George Marando was also awakened from his bed by the noise and glare of the fire. When he stumbled to his window he expected to see the house next door on fire.

But for the first time in his 42 years of living on Kane Rd., Marando saw a major fire at the Texaco plant behind his home.

He was one of the few neighbors who can remember when Kane was just a mud track and the property behind was dotted with vegetables instead of fuel oil tanks.

The Lloyd Refinery was located south of the Canadian National tracks when Marando moved in on April Fool's Day in 1936.

Marando's nephew, Michael, who lives next door was just drifting off to sleep when sirens penetrated his dreams.

"My mother told me we had to get up and out. I saw the flame, felt the heat, gathered up my four siblings and headed up the street. I put a football sweater over my pyjamas."

The Marandos stood watching the blaze for about an hour before a CBR from Rexdale gave them a ride down to the Port Credit library where evacuees were given hot coffee.

Joan Phillips was one of those who clustered in a crowd on Indian Road, not knowing where she could go for shelter. "It's hard to walk away from your house," she explained. "You want to stay as close as possible."

About 6 a.m., just when it appeared the blaze was under control, "there was a tremendous boom and the whole sky lit up like daylight. It was violent," remarked Phillips.

When the blaze was finally stemmed at about noon Monday, the accolades began for those who had worked so hard to bring emergency aid.

Port Credit Councillor Frank Leavers praised Archie Chase and his staff at Port Credit arena who'd left the arena about midnight Sunday after the Ice Owls Fritterfest hockey game.

A few hours later, the entire staff was back at the arena, ready to hand out hot coffee to the first evacuees through the door.

Leavers himself drove a Kane resident through three road-blocks so that he could get his wife's medication. All the excitement had worsened her nervous condition. Leavers' father had



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worked for Texaco for 34 years, and spent six months in hospital after the last bad fire in the mid-1940s.

Chris Kourtas, co-owner of the Lakeview Restaurant at 40 Lakeshore Rd. E., supplied free donuts to those stranded at the library and put up about 100 people in his restaurant, some in the basement.

"Kids slept and played on the floor and watched the fire," explained Dave Hall, manager of the library. Both Leavers, and Mayor Ron Searle, who was on site for most of the night, were struck by the calm attitude of the evacuated residents at the library.

In the morning, members from St.

Stephen's-on-the-Hill church took sandwiches and dry socks to the firemen battling the blaze.

There were about 40 Red Cross workers on hand, from Mississauga, North York, Etobicoke, Leaside, Georgetown, and the central Toronto area, according to Etobicoke coordinator Enny Morling.

She estimated that they'd doled out

"thousands" of cups of coffee to the workers.

As the final dousing touches were being put on the mound of charred, foamy pipes, Bob Miller stood about 100 yards away, murmuring that "I sure wish I were 20 years younger. I'd be in the middle of that putting on the dry chemicals."



GORM LARSEN/THE TIMES