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RUBBER DUMP FIRE

A tyre dump blaze near Mitcham Common, sets up this massive smoke column in London's fire of the year. Visible 15 miles away it soon blotted out the Capital's sunny afternoon sky. First to reach the blaze, our cameramen went into action with the 400 firemen on the job. Their pictures show this to be the Capital's most spectacular fire since the blitz.

The eye piece of a dumped civilian gas mask is believed to have caused the fire. It acted as a burning glass. From it, the Government depot of 10,000 tons of rubber became an almost total loss. Flames leapt from one tyre pile to another, making the whole depot a circle of flame.

Firemen fought all afternoon and evening to control the blaze. Only a narrow street separated dwelling houses from the dump. Their occupants helped the firemen in their task. Damage is estimated at £40,000. It was a fire seen by 10 million Londoners.