

**IT LOOKS SERIOUS.** The flames leap high and the house looks doomed. In fact, it IS doomed. The fire brigade declined to put out the blaze in an old house at the foot of Vivian St, New Plymouth, early today. But it's all right—the brigade had instructions to burn the place down.

# FIREMEN JUST WATCHED

## Moved 67 years ago

The old house in Vivian St which was burnt down this morning was moved there from another site in Vivian St 67 years ago.

Part of the building which was nearest to the Vivian St frontage and constructed in solid timber with vertical wallboards, was moved to the site when the old Leach St railway line provided the outlet from New Plymouth.

At the time the house belonged to Mr Robert Clinton Hughes, a lawyer and first secretary of the Pukekura Park committee.

Mr Hughes hired a contractor, Mr Robert Coleman, to shift the house. The moving started at 6 a.m. on Sunday, September 25, 1898, and finished several days later.

The contractor met difficulty at the railway line, and a train had to be held up for some time until the building could be jacked across. It took 12 hours, from the time the contractor started shifting the house, to get it over the crossing.

There was a court case over the affair, the contractor, Mr Coleman, being charged with working at his trade in a public place on a Sunday. The case was dismissed.

After it was moved to the site the back portion, nearest to the Huatoki Stream, was added.

The last owner of the house was a Miss Sutherland who lived there for several years before going to England, where she died.

Flames leapt high and soon the whole house was ablaze — but the firemen merely stood by: they were interested spectators. Some hoses were waved about, but not at the house, only at the surrounding area.

Soon it was all over. The house was destroyed and only a chimney remained standing.

But it wasn't a firemen's strike, or anything sinister like that. The firemen were supervising the burning.

The house, a city council property about 90 years old, at the Carrington St end of Vivian St had been used by the brigade for "practice runs" for some time prior to the burning down today.

Three appliances and 16 firemen went to the scene about 5.30 a.m. and started the fire about 5.45.

Two fires were started in the top floor and the house burned from the top down. It took about 1½ hours to burn. Surrounding trees were kept damped down with hoses on all sides of the house.

No problems were encountered and the fire went straight up, the deputy chief fire officer, Mr P. K. Burton-Wood, said today. Few spectators appeared on the scene.

Firemen kept a watch on the smouldering ashes this morning.

A HOUSE WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE IN NEW PLYMOUTH TODAY, AND THE FIRE BRIGADE WATCHED IT BURN DOWN.

## Shouts of 'Resign' in Parliament

LONDON, Friday. — Britain's four-month-old Labour Government tonight suffered its first House of Commons defeat over the procedural issue that may kill a bill to outlaw hanging.

There were loud Conservative cheers and cries of "Resign" when a motion to transfer a no-hanging bill from a standing committee to the House of Commons was carried by 128 to 120. The motion had been opposed by the Government.

The defeat is regarded by political observers as a severe prestige rebuff to the Government; but the issue was a minor one, and a Government only resigns after defeat on a major issue.

Political observers said the defeat of the Government might mean that the measure is now dead.

Two men are at present under sentence of death — Ralph Robinson (56) sentenced at Leicester on Thursday for two murders by shooting at Bedford on January 2; and Joseph Lawrence (26), a Jamaican factory labourer, whose appeal against his conviction for capital murder in Staffordshire on February 8 was dismissed by the Court of Criminal appeal on March 2.

## Grenade wounds 34 children

SAIGON, Friday. — Thirty-four Vietnamese children were wounded when a grenade which one of them had picked up exploded today in a school yard at Pleiku, 250 miles north-east of Saigon.

An American military spokesman said a schoolboy had picked up the grenade from a ditch while on an outing, and it exploded when he dropped it in the school.

At Da Nang, Government forces have warned villagers around the U.S. Air Base not to let Viet Cong guerrillas enter their homes because they may have been infected by lepers.

Leaflets say a Viet Cong group hiding from Government troops hid in a leper hospital recently, some of them even climbing into the lepers' beds.

South Vietnam's 18-day-old Government has summoned its ambassadors to Saigon for consultations on policy, informed sources said yesterday.

The talks, beginning next Tuesday come amid mounting international moves towards a negotiated settlement of the Vietnam War, which has entered a new phase with the U.S. bombing raids on North Vietnam.

## MP resigns over Vietnam

(By Geoffrey Whitehead) LONDON, Friday. — Left-wing unrest against the British Government's support of United States policy in Vietnam sharpened today with the resign-