

CYPRUS FOREST FIRE FIRST PICTURES

19 VICTIMS BURIED

Fire raged in ~~the~~ a forest area of the Troodos Mountains. When it seemed under control the wind suddenly changed, driving the ~~blaze~~ downwards at 30 m.p.h. In a matter of minutes nineteen soldiers were cut off and lost their lives. Another 18 escaped with burns.

At dawn the last flames ^{still} flickered and as the smoke cleared, a large area of desolation was revealed. It was not known whether mortar shells started the blaze or whether terrorists did so ~~the~~ ^{to} screen their escape and prevent pursuit. ~~Even~~

Even one ambulance was burned in the rescue operation. Not all 30 the rebels got away. One led the troops to a terrorist hideout, ~~too~~ late to capture others. It was easy to see that even from the air the place was not visible.

Soldiers made the dugout unusable. ~~before they left.~~

Later at Nicosia the forest fire victims were buried. It was one more tragedy in the ^{island} ~~island~~ story.... A corner of a Cyprus field that is forever Britain.