

58/22.

FIREMEN START A FIRE:

Twenty-three old tenement houses in Paris are due for demolition - so the Paris Fire Brigade decide it's a good excuse for a spot of practice. A few litres of petrol - a warning call - and off we go!

The old houses have been stocked with waste timber, so in no time they're blazing merrily. It's not often our cameramen get warning of a fire - and it's still more rare for the firemen to be filming it, too; but they want to study every detail of the exercise, so their cameramen work alongside ours.

Object of the exercise is not merely to practice the drill - it's also to try out new equipment - like this gun-carriage hose, which (it is claimed) can throw a jet of water for two miles. It's to be hoped this week's French government have umbrellas - Paris isn't all that big.

Chief worry is to make sure the fire doesn't spread to houses which haven't been condemned - but everything's under control, the exercise is a complete success, and many useful lessons have been learned. Only complaint is from the demolition workers' union - they've been down out of a job!