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NEWS FROM FRANCE

A strike of transport workers brings Paris to its feet as Parisians pled their pay to work. The Metro is closed so you can't go by underground. It's a strike for more pay which only higher fares could make possible (say the Government). Above ground the bus stations are deserted because the buses aren't running, either.

But there's still plenty of traffic in Paris and if you're lucky - or the right shape - you stand a good chance of riding to work in comfort. Meantime, the Government has organised emergency measures to get Paris to work, complete with "Fall Up" signs to cut out queuing.

No, this has nothing to do with the strike. It's a new French self-propelled gun showing its paces. Fast, hard-hitting, with a wide angle of fire, it looks a useful recruit to Western Defence. This armoured car has a hundred-pounder gun with a twelve-mile range ... a real tank-killer. Perhaps the most surprising thing about these two new French weapons is their high speed over broken ground.

Back in Paris trouble piles on trouble as students from the French Universities come out on strike as a protest again Government plans to cut their social security funds by more than half. When students try to break through a cordon to protest to the National Assembly things start to happen.

All is peaceful again as the students assemble for a meeting. In Paris alone there are 30,000 students so it's just as well it's only a one-day strike. But once again some hot-head started something and the gendarmes have to get cracking once more.

And they sing of Paris in the Spring!