drove these poor proles to peddling dope (which is, after all, more humane than hunting dope-peddlers). We must not condemn; we should study the criminal mind—or the Marxist ideology—and talk their language; see what honor there is among thieves; learn to duck when a cop—or the FBI—strolls by. Until society learns to sympathize with the outcast ones, the tough guy must make it his vocation to protect them.

Though these Bogarts are only Bogarts—that is, actors—and though they do not get the danger or excitement that they yearn for in their safe world, they *do* get results. They do not really understand the criminals undermining our whole civilization. But they protect them.

The Way of All France

LEE EDWARDS

The water had stopped. There was no electricity. In the kitchen the gas burners were cold. Outside, on the sidewalks, last night's potato peels, meat scraps and tomato cores rotted inside garbage cans. Today the postman would not ring even once. Beneath the street there was no rumble of the subway, and above it buses and trains stood motionless in their barns. No airplanes crossed the hazy November sky. But the city teemed with life. The populace moved by automobile, truck, scooter, bicycle, cart, and on foot.

Were the people fleeing from a doomed city? Had they been given a few hours to collect their families and belongings before the approach of a dreaded enemy? This was not a city stricken with panic or despair, but the acknowledged center of pleasure and luxury, Paris. This was Paris, the capital of France, a modern metropolis of three and a half million, placidly going about its business in the midst of a 48-hour strike, one of three similar national strikes within the year.

As an American reared in a paradise founded by Ford, sustained by Standard Oil and perpetuated by Prudential, I was highly indignant at such inefficiency. The latter is a word scarcely recognized by us but daily and devotedly practiced by all Europeans in general and by all Frenchmen in particular. My protesting tenor was a lonely voice crying in an unconcerned metropolis.

I awoke that November morning with a start shortly after eight. The electric clock beside my bed read one minute after twelve, the publicized hour of the strike. Madame Bourney, from whom I rented one room of a three-room apartment, had warned me the night before to save some water for my morning wash. The cold water was invigorating, recalling army days on bivouac, until I used it for shaving. I was not sure whether I cut myself because of the cold water or because I could see only approximately by the gray light of a dim fall day.

"Rien à Faire"

Madame Bourney smiled at me, waving a hand filled with melba toast, as I left for school—having lived in Paris for almost sixty years she calmly accepted such inconveniences. At the café on the corner, I dipped a stale croissant into lukewarm coffee. There would be, of course, no fresh bread for two days. The conversation of the owner and a friend was desultory, resigned. I caught the phrase, *"rien à faire,"* literally, nothing to do.

As I walked the mile to the Sorbonne, I passed hundreds of people of every economic level walking briskly to work. Every car, every truck was filled to capacity. Balanced precariously on a motor scooter, three students putt-putted by. French "paddy wagons," usually reserved for "ladies of the evening" and assorted criminals, collected government workers at designated corners. Bureaucracy would not have a holiday.

After school there was nothing to do but go to a café and talk. As dusk drew near, candles appeared in a thousand windows. Some gas, it was learned, remained in the pipes of the restaurants, enough to assure heat for cooking, at least for that first night. Dinner that evening, by flickering candlelight, was a romantic's delight.

As there could be no movies, plays or concerts, the cafés quickly filled and overflowed. Conversation, always a major art in Paris, was animated. Yet, as I listened, I heard no indignant accusations, no threatened reforms, no emphatic demands. At the very least, a similar situation in New York or Washington would have resulted in a crash program, the appointment of a czar, a Senate investigation, an accusation by Adams, a denial by Reuther and a five-billion-dollar drop in the stock market followed closely by a six-billion-dollar recovery.

At the Café Select, I casually asked a long-time inhabitant of the *quartier* how he felt about the strike. "It is impossible," he replied. "The unions strike to force a wage increase so the government, almost bankrupt by the Algerian War and income tax evasion, promises to investigate. In two days the strike ends, and the government conveniently forgets its promise. So," he concluded, "everything limps along until the next time the unions become impatient with their low wages and demonstrate again." He shrugged and began discussing the latest exhibition of an artist friend.

Not every one of the public utilities and services ceased completely. Even a strike could not be carried through 100 per cent effectively by the notoriously individualistic unions. But my building in the 14th *arrondisement* was without gas, electricity and water for the entire period.

Fatalistic acceptance is to be commended in war or in any time of crisis. But apathy and indifference to ills that can be cured are dangerous symptoms of a dying society. History records no nation that died of ennui, but the present era is a revolutionary one that writes its own laws. If political and economic *laissez-faire* continue in France, we may live to see the poignant shrug become a final compulsive shudder and the phrase *"rien à faire"* an epitaph.

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