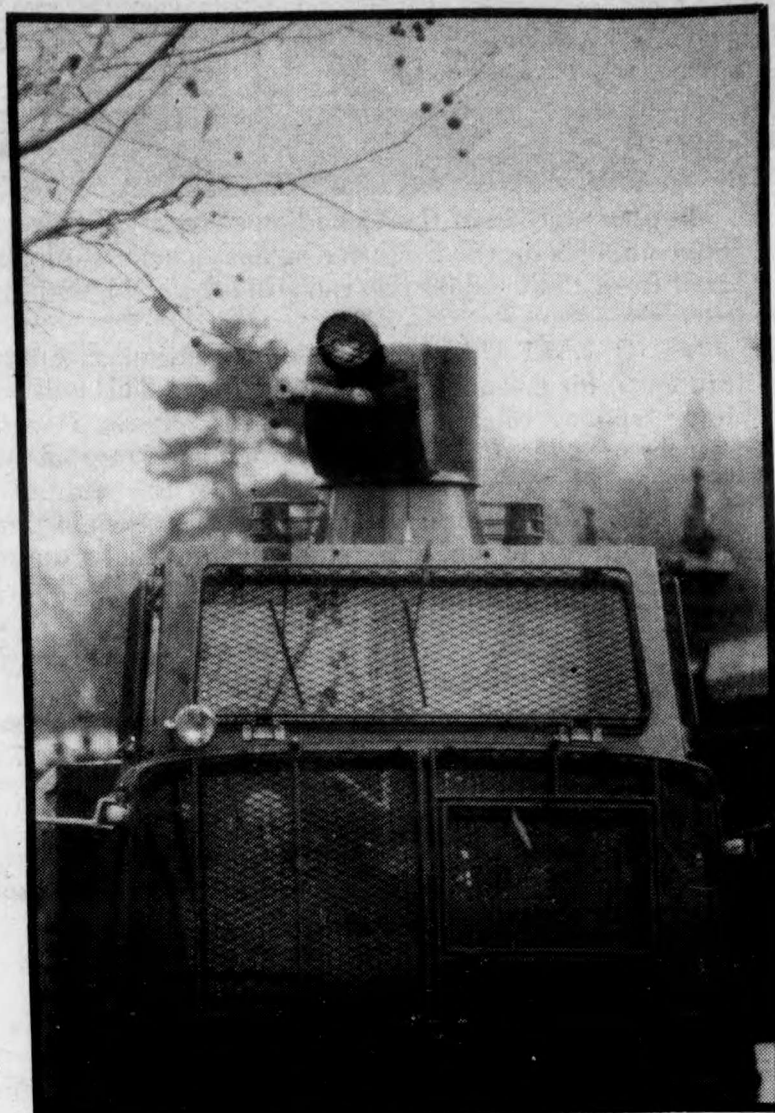




*Forever "en garde", Gendarmes observe student protests on a major route in Paris*



*"A water cannon — a very real deterrent."*



*Two gendarmes exemplify the concern over the potential violence during student demonstrations*



*French police gather in front of the watchful eye of a water cannon on a Paris street*

# alive and well in Paris

segments.

When the French government proposed sweeping reforms this fall which threatened to put access and completion of secondary education beyond the reach of many, the reaction of the student community was underestimated. The outcry was characterized by intensity and persistence, progressively turning public opinion against the reform initiative. The government withdrew the reform package and work has begun on alternative proposals. Score a decisive student victory.

Critics of the French government de-

nounced the backdown as an ill-timed sign of weakness in a country crippled by strikes.

Others heralded the move as a much needed show of flexibility and willingness to compromise.

Students are back in classes now and attention has turned to the concerns of other striking sectors of the Parisian populace.

With Canadian education costs rising and a bleak summer employment forecast here, a common bond forms with students near and far, who face similar odds, in the high stakes game of higher education.