

# **PIERRE PÉLADEAU THE UNKNOWN**

**By Bernard Bujold**



## **Pierre Péladeau the Unknown**

### **DIGITAL EDITION**

**This book is a re-edition of the paper publication written in 2003. I wanted to make the document available on the Internet, in French and English, for digital readers like myself.**

**According to my vision of writing, a book in virtual format is eternal, unlike a paper edition which lives only a few years in the library and even less time in bookstores.**

**Pierre Péladeau was a French-speaking leader in Quebec, and his audacity enabled many Quebecers to pursue careers in the world of communications, thanks to the Quebecor Empire created by Pierre Péladeau. Pierre Péladeau's example is an inspiration to many, even today in 2023, and I am particularly proud to have been at his side from 1991 until his death on December 2, 1997. I considered Pierre Péladeau a friend, and I dare to think that he liked me...**

**Bernard Bujold**

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## **NOTES:**

**I had the pleasure of sharing the daily professional life of Pierre Péladeau, the founder of the Journal de Montréal and of the QUEBECOR empire, during the last seven years of his life from 1991 to 1997.**

**I shared this experience in a book:**

**«Pierre Péladeau cet inconnu» published in French on February 2003 at the Éditions Trait d'Union.**

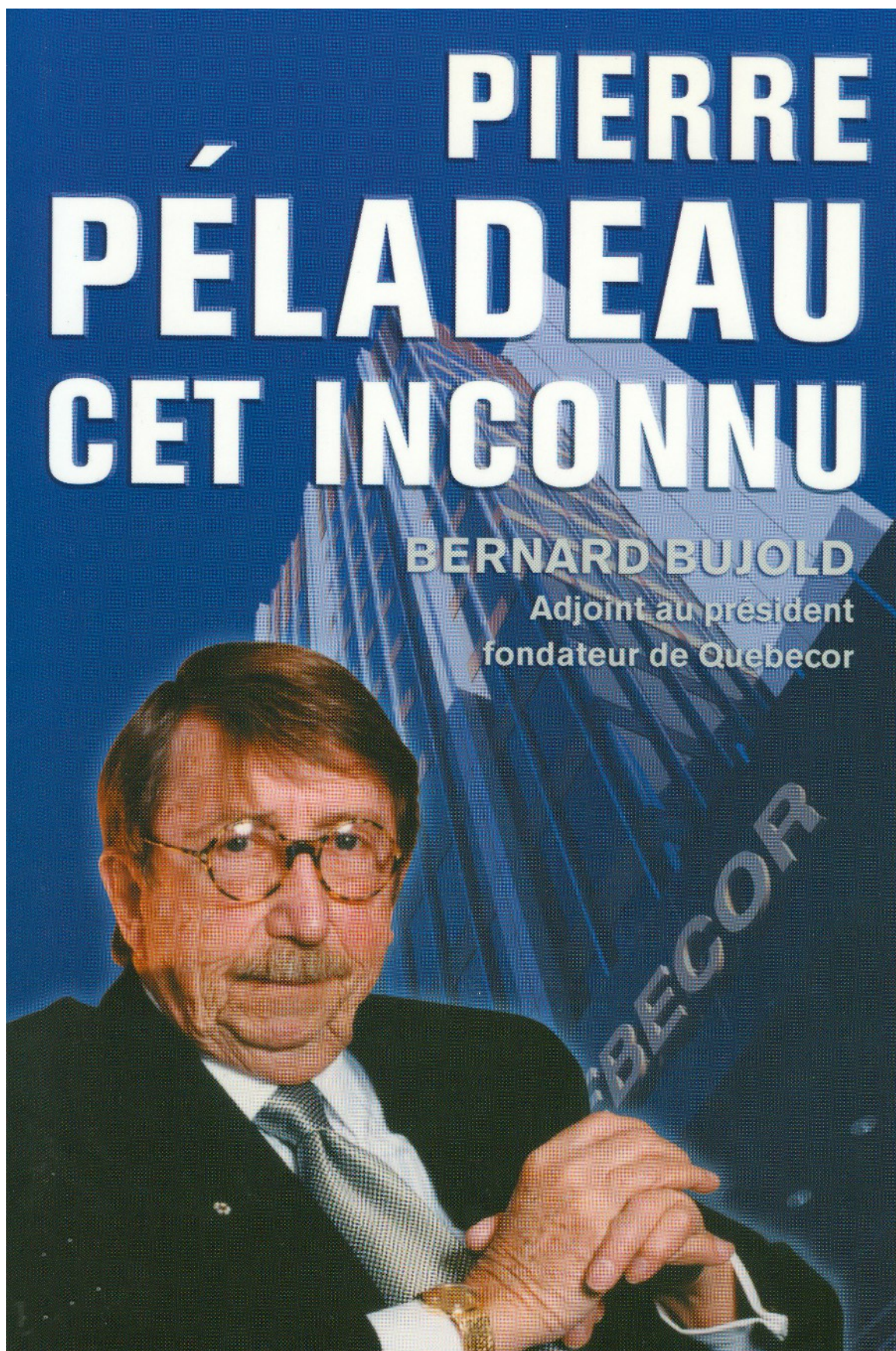
**This is the virtual edition, which I'm publishing in September 2023 to mark the 20th anniversary of the first edition.**

**This re-edition is available for free download on the Internet.**

**Good reading  
Bernard Bujold-**

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Front cover - Original paper Edition 2003



Quand Pierre Péladeau tombe dans le coma, le 2 décembre 1997, son ami et adjoint Bernard Bujold l'accompagne dans l'ambulance jusqu'à l'hôpital, où il mourra, vingt-deux jours plus tard, sans avoir repris conscience. Bernard Bujold signe ici un portrait fascinant du président et fondateur de Quebecor, ce géant économique dont le chiffre d'affaires dépasse actuellement les 12 milliards de dollars. L'intimité et la connivence qui lièrent Péladeau et Bujold ajoutent au plaisir de découvrir des aspects inconnus d'un personnage haut en couleur, qui a prouvé que les Québécois pouvaient parvenir au sommet du monde des affaires. Véritable héros populaire, Pierre Péladeau fut aussi une source d'inspiration pour toute une génération d'entrepreneurs.

Présentée sous forme de confidence, cette biographie non autorisée nous fait découvrir l'homme public et privé au cœur de son quotidien et peut servir de véritable enseignement de l'art de faire des affaires. Malgré sa prodigieuse réussite financière, Pierre Péladeau aurait préféré être un artiste. Celui qui avait commencé sa carrière comme imprésario a fréquenté, aimé, encouragé et financé les artistes toute sa vie.

Père de sept enfants nés de trois unions, il pouvait avoir jusqu'à dix maîtresses à la fois, qui connaissaient et acceptaient toutes l'existence de leurs rivales. Il admira et appuya René Lévesque dans la victoire comme dans la défaite. Ce livre traite aussi de ses relations tumultueuses avec ses premiers enfants, dont Pierre-Karl, qu'il admirait et jalousait à la fois, et de sa découverte tardive des plaisirs de la paternité avec «Petit Jean», le fils que lui donna sa troisième femme. On y relate comment il savait utiliser les talents des autres à leur maximum, dont ceux de Brian Mulroney, ses sentiments contradictoires envers la communauté juive et son engagement profond dans la lutte contre l'alcoolisme, dont il avait lui-même souffert.

Cet homme d'affaires redoutable et redouté a fait de Quebecor le plus grand groupe d'imprimeries du monde. Il croisa le fer avec des colosses comme Robert Maxwell et Conrad Black et terrorisait quiconque osait l'affronter. Selon Bernard Bujold, Pierre Péladeau fut le Don Corleone du Québec, érigeant son pouvoir sur un réseau de faveurs et d'amitiés savamment orchestrées, les crimes en moins, bien sûr.

Son décès prématuré et la course à sa succession ont créé une grande incertitude quant à l'avenir de son empire. Pierre-Karl Péladeau est maintenant à la barre de Quebecor. Qu'advient-il de ce qui constitue l'héritage de l'un des plus grands bâtisseurs du Québec moderne ? Bernard Bujold prend parti sur cette question brûlante d'actualité.



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**To my two children, David and Stephanie.  
Thanks to Carole for her generous collaboration on this  
book, and to  
Heljon de Rueire for his inspiration.**

**“Blood ties are always the strongest..”.  
Mario Puzo, The Godfather.**

**“Man’s best allies are women and horses..”.  
Napoleon Bonaparte.**

# Introduction

**Five years ago, in December 1997, Pierre Péladeau, one of the most controversial figures in Canadian business, passed away, leaving his seven children, born of three different unions, one of North America's richest and most powerful publishing and printing empires.**

**I came into Pierre Péladeau's life in 1991 when the Quebecor empire was growing and he had the wind in his sails. At that time, sales reached more than two billion dollars. Twelve years later, at the beginning of 2003, it was more than \$12 billion.**

**With Pierre Péladeau, I experienced several unique, captivating, and sometimes historic events. My main responsibility was to ensure that the media mogul's public image lived up to the character. I believe I knew Péladeau in many aspects of his personality that were not always visible at first glance. I was first and foremost an executive assistant but gradually became a friend and confidant of Quebecor's founding president.**

**Today, five years after his death, I realize that I lived alongside Pierre Péladeau during a very eventful period in his life and necessarily in Quebecor's history. I met the Quebec businessman more than twenty-five years ago and I learned how to tame him. I firmly believe that the story of this great character deserves to be told.**



**I am a great lover of photography and, in my opinion, an image often allows us to perceive the true side of people. When I take photographs, I try to capture the soul of the person in front of my camera. You may or may not like my work, but I wanted to do a kind of close-up portrait of Pierre Péladeau, taken from the angle where I knew him and which, I believe, brings out several little-known sides of the character. This book offers a story full of anecdotes and recounts several facts experienced in business or political circles with various personalities from Quebec and Canada. Pierre Péladeau has left us a legacy that it is up to us to discover in all its good and bad sides. I am very pleased to present to you the real Pierre Péladeau.**

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**Bernard Bujold - 1996**

# **Chapter 1**

## **December 2, 1997**

The day had started as usual. It was a beautiful cold but sunny winter day.

The agenda of Pierre Péladeau, the great boss of the Quebecor empire, was well-filled. A few problems to solve and internal meetings in the morning. In the afternoon, he had set an appointment with a journalist from Radio-Canada. This interview had been planned for a few weeks already and dealt with a subject that was particularly close to his heart: patronage and the arts. He had also been asked to choose some of his favorite pieces of music to be played throughout the program broadcast on the corporation's FM radio station. I had sent him a note a few weeks earlier and he said to grant the interview on December 2 at 3:00 p.m. He said he would do the interview.

While he had been labeled a very rigid businessman and manager, with a reputation as a great seducer and a less popular irreverent character, he had also been discovered to be a great philanthropist, admirer, and friend of artists and creators. This character trait marked in an important way the last part of his life. According to his many detractors, he wanted to redeem himself. According to the principal concerned, life had pampered him and it was normal for him to give back a little of what he had received.

On the evening of the fateful day, a concert of the Orchestre métropolitain was held at Place des Arts, and Mr. Péladeau had invited about fifty people to attend. As Assistant to the President, I was responsible for coordinating the event and assigning seats to the guests. So I spent a good part of the

morning checking certain details and confirming last-minute attendees.

Around 12:30 p.m., Mr. Péladeau went out for dinner. To this day, we still don't know who "Mr. P." was going to meet. There was nothing on his agenda and on his way out, he did not mention anything to his secretary about his schedule between noon and 2:00 p.m. either. To this day, the mystery remains. We don't seem to know who the person with whom he would have shared his last meal was. A number of people were questioned, but the question remained unanswered.

Pierre Péladeau returned to the office around 2:15 p.m. to prepare for the 3:00 p.m. interview. He took off his slaps, which he laid out in a row in the bathroom of his office on the 13th floor of the Quebecor Building on Saint-Jacques Street, in the heart of Montreal's business district.

This office has been photographed on several occasions and the photographs have been published in several magazines and journals. We know that the large office was located at the corner of Saint-Jacques and McGill Streets. Windowed on two sides of the walls, it had a round work table and four chairs at the entrance. Further on was his desk with a cabinet on the side, along the windows, on which his stereo system and the records of his favorite music were placed, which he listened to all the time.

Pierre Péladeau hung his coat on a hanger and sat down, not at his desk, but at the nearby work table. He might have had a breakdown at that very moment and would have been too weak to make it to his desk. He was alone, everyone was going about their business. Everything was normal.

Around 2:30 p.m., his secretary heard him coughing in an unusual way. She then asked him if everything was okay, but did not get an answer. Mr. P. was very proud and did not like people to pity him or witness his weaknesses. As his secretary could not hear any sound, she left her workstation and went to her boss, who was a little too quiet.



During the last few months, Pierre Péladeau, then seventy-two years old, had had some discomforts, some of which, quite seriously, had been experienced during conferences given to different groups of people from different walks of life. There had been no pressure; he loved these kinds of meetings. It was “his” routine, but it seemed as if the body wasn’t following.

After drinking a very strong coffee, he would come to his senses, regain color and go on as if nothing had happened. He had increased his consumption of strong coffee significantly in the months leading up to his attack on December 2, 1997.

He was not paying attention to his diet and could eat very rich foods that were not recommended for his condition. He did not deprive himself of anything. It was useless to try to contain him. He refused to hear about it. He didn’t want to know that if he continued in this way, he would die. He would always postpone any questions about possible emergency measures to be taken about him, or he would systematically dismiss the question.

So that day, I was on the phone, talking with one of Mr. Péladeau’s guests for the concert planned for that evening, when Micheline Bourget, his secretary, came into my office in tears. I have trouble understanding what she is saying to me, she is so upset, but I guessed something serious happened. I run to my boss’s office and find him passed out in his chair. A trickle of saliva flows between his lips and, visibly, he’s not breathing.

Even though all the staff knew that Mr. Péladeau was frail, none of the employees in his immediate circle knew about the resuscitation maneuvers. We knew, first of all, Pierre Péladeau, that such an incident could happen at any time, but we had not yet taken the necessary steps to train at least one person in his immediate circle who could administer first aid in a crisis.

Witnesses will say I was calm. I would say I was prepared. It was a scenario that had been going through my mind for several months already; in fact, especially since I had realized that he would not change his mind about emergency measures; I was expecting this situation anytime. When I was on vacation a few months earlier, I was always on the lookout for news. I was sure I would hear “the news”. When that moment came, I was mentally prepared for it. On the outside, I looked like I had it under control, but on the inside it was different. I was worried.

I was as saddened by what was happening to my boss and friend as I was by what was happening to the company. Even today, I am unable to explain what I really felt; it was a mixture of grief and apprehension about Quebecor’s future, as well as about the various works Pierre Péladeau had devoted himself to over the last few years.

Within seconds, amazement gripped just about everyone on the 13th floor. Gradually, I went through all the floors to quickly find someone who could intervene while waiting for the ambulance to arrive but taking care not to name the person to be rescued. I went down from the 12th floor to the 11th floor and was told that Lise Courtemanche, a legal assistant, had first aid training. She rushed up to the 13th floor, and it wasn’t until she got there that she knew who it was. She took matters into her own hands. We were around to assist her. We helped her move Mr. Péladeau and she did the artificial respiration maneuvers to rescue her boss.

The heart started beating again, but Pierre Péladeau never regained consciousness. In my heart of hearts, I knew he would never recover.

I accompanied him to the hospital, but again it was not as fast as we would have liked. Although the paramedics reassured everyone on site about the first aid provided, every minute that passed was precious in saving the famous patient. The stretcher did not fit into the elevator and had to

**be placed in a diagonal position. This also meant holding the patient securely so that he moved as little as possible.**

**I remember precisely every moment that followed the arrival of the ambulance at the Hôtel-Dieu emergency department: the handing over by the hospital staff of an envelope containing Pierre Péladeau's personal belongings (watch, wallet, etc.); the waiting in a small room with Sylvie Laplante, his former personal assistant, who was immediately rushed; Érik Péladeau's reaction to the tragedy; and the first remarks of the doctors as to his chances of survival.**

**At the time of the accident, a journalist from Radio-Canada had arrived at Quebecor's office and, in spite of himself, had attended an event other than the one on his program. He was already in the lobby when Mr. Péladeau collapsed in his office. As an exclusive, no one could ask for more. But Quebecor management refused to confirm the news. They didn't want it to spread too quickly. We also had to wait for the doctor's diagnosis. There were also other important problems that arose that were of a completely different order than the human factor, i.e. the management of financial information. Because Quebecor's shares were traded on the stock exchange, it was necessary to manage information in such a way as to comply with the law but also to avoid a dramatic drop in the share price.**

**I was well aware that, for some time, Mr. Péladeau had been busy signing legal documents such as his will, a power of attorney in case of an accident, a mandate of incapacity, in short, everything that a businessman managing an empire such as his and coveted by a relatively large number of potential successors would have to keep up to date. For him, it seemed as if continually postponing the deadline for this fundamental exercise was a guarantee of longevity. Having said that it was eternal, perhaps he had come to believe it?**

**Mr. Péladeau had not definitively determined who would take over in the short, medium, or even long term. There was, of course, a collection of vice presidents within the company to**



fill in for the interim, but in my opinion, if Mr. Péladeau had regained consciousness and been in a position to make decisions, it is very likely that the course of events would have been different.

In the first instance, Mr. Péladeau had already advised some of these vice presidents that they would be laid off or retired shortly. Some of them had already lost their secretaries. They were due to leave after the holiday break, and it was only a matter of days or months before they would all be gone, and the key people involved were well aware of what lay ahead.

In addition, Mr. Péladeau had been taking personal notes (memory aids) for some time in order to revise his will. At any time, he would write a small note on a piece of paper: “I bequeath this or that amount to this or that other person. “I don’t know what happened to that binder where my boss kept a staggering number of these “little papers”. Only the boss knew what the game plan for the “after Pierre Péladeau” was. The problem was that he kept it in his head and hadn’t shared it with anyone by the time he passed out on the afternoon of December 2, 1997. Some people knew bits and pieces of it, but no one can claim to have had knowledge of all the last wishes of the big boss of the company. He was considering gradually withdrawing from the management of Quebecor and allowing the next generation of employees to take over the company to ensure his succession. He planned to take time off and devote himself to writing his autobiography. Moreover, even though his leadership had been seriously questioned by some members of his entourage during the year preceding his premature departure, and despite certain crises provoked to force his retirement, Pierre Péladeau remained the only master on board after God. Most of the giants in the business world fear-

Most of the giants in the business community feared Pierre Péladeau was still alive, even at the age of seventy-two, and even though his physique, already not very imposing, had suffered the ravages of time and was considerably weakened,

especially during the last year. Even I, who had been with him almost every day since I had been in his service, could not believe how Mr. Péladeau was imposing so much on such a physically fragile being.

When he was in a coma, his grip still reigned. But it was short-lived.

When I left the emergency department, his children, who had taken charge of the situation, made it clear to me that my presence was no longer required at the hospital and that they would now manage this crisis on their own.

“You don’t take care of our father anymore, we’ll take care of him. “At first, I was naive enough to think that this was something the family wanted to follow up on personally, which was completely normal. But as the days went by and I was no longer given new responsibilities in Quebecor communications, I realized that I would probably be away from the head office permanently, once the new management was in place.

I was particularly struck by the reaction of the management staff immediately after Mr. Péladeau’s hospitalization; while some were devastated by the disappearance of the big boss and were praying, in tears, for his return, others had no difficulty turning the page. Their mourning was already done, and it was taken for granted that the boss had left for good. This withdrawal soon manifested itself in a number of changes in the day-to-day management practices at various levels.

One example, more comical than dramatic, is that of a vice president whom I knew well. We know that Pierre Péladeau did not easily accept expense accounts. This Vice President and Service Director religiously brought his lunch and always ate in his office, and this, since the time of my beginnings at Quebecor. In the weeks following the accident on December 2, this vice president suddenly began to go out and eat out more often, which he charged to his expense account. The

king was not yet dead, so they were taking advantage of his piggy bank.

Although the company was a multinational corporation with a large staff, the expense accounts had always been scrutinized by the founder, who reduced them to a strict minimum. The vice presidents were not asked on their hiring forms the following questions: Which golf club do you want to join? Do you want to join St. Denis, St. James, Mount Stephen, etc.? At Quebecor, there was no budget for recreation of this nature. In any case, if you wanted to join anyone in the community, you simply had to mention the name "Mr. P." and you were done. You didn't have to take that person to a restaurant to convince them.

The first medical reports released at a press conference had raised hopes that Mr. Péladeau would gradually emerge from his coma. But while these releases were meant to reassure his admirers in general and investors in particular, those at his bedside saw no improvement. He had been deprived of oxygen for a period of time that we were never able to determine, but the brain damage was irreversible.

On the evening of December 2, I had to welcome Pierre Péladeau's personal guests to the concert evening, which could not be canceled. It was humanly impossible at that time to reach everyone and warn them of the change in the program. In addition, several hundred people were present because they had bought their tickets. They were there to hear the orchestra. People had simply been told that Mr. Péladeau had had a slight malaise; they didn't want to let anything slip out about the seriousness of his condition. I went to Place des Arts to hand out about 50 tickets, simply mentioning that "Mr. P." was being held back by his "business".

Several people told me about it later, telling me I was very pale on the evening of December 2nd and looked very tired.

Many of the guests present had not listened to the news and were not aware of the "accident". They were there and asked

to say hello to Pierre Péladeau. All I could say was that my boss was being held elsewhere. It had happened a couple of times, no one cared. But I couldn't help but tell the truth to Jean-Marc Brunet, a great friend of Pierre Péladeau. To him alone, I confided :

“It's going badly. I think we're going to lose him! ”

Discreetly, we both left the hall of Place des Arts and headed towards the Hôtel-Dieu, at the bedside of the being we loved and admired above all else.

Since he didn't like to go out alone, Mr. Péladeau had invited one of his personal friends, Jacqueline Mallette, an Acadian of Acadian origin, to have dinner with him that evening after work, and then to accompany him to the concert.

Ms. Mallette was one of the people who hadn't been listening to the news, so she showed up at the office at 6:00 p.m. sharp, very happy to see her friend who had spoken to her in the morning to confirm their meeting. When she saw her, two staff members close to Mr. Péladeau asked her what she was doing there. Candidly and a little surprised at their reaction, she answered: “But I'm here to see Pierre. He gave me an appointment this morning. He told me that we were going to the concert together tonight. ”

We had to explain to her that there were important changes to the program, for her and for others!

It was nightmarish. I knew that this kind of event could happen at any time. I had seen Mr. Péladeau weaken over the past few months. He loved his work so much that he was not resigned to “dropping out” for good to enjoy a well-deserved retirement. But he was thinking about it.

A lot of people had advised me to find a job elsewhere in the last year at Quebecor. It seems that many people were already seeing Mr. Péladeau gone, old, tired, and undermined by the internal struggles for power, while we who were in daily contact with him, although aware of his physical vulnerability, did not accept the possibility that he might leave his position one day or another. In spite of his seventy-



two years of age and his health problems, he still had a more alert mind than many people half his age who were not under the pressure he was under every day.

Working for Pierre Péladeau was a challenge, not in relation to him, but in relation to ourselves. We had to be able to continually surpass ourselves, not only because that was what he expected of us, but above all because from the moment we committed ourselves in some way to “deliver the goods,” we had to be able to do it quickly.

From the day after the accident, I went through a difficult period that lasted until we left for the Christmas vacation. It was quite obvious that the succession already in place was closing the doors on me, and gradually my files were being taken away from me.

Isabelle Péladeau, the eldest daughter after Érik, invited me to collaborate in the writing of the souvenir album she prepared and published by Publicor in January 1998: *Hommage à un grand bâtisseur, PIERRE PÉLADEAU*. This was my last professional collaboration with Pierre Péladeau’s family. Isabelle and I stayed in contact for two or three years after the death of her father.

It was with a heavy heart that I left the office on December 22nd for the Christmas vacation. Quebecor’s new management had asked all staff to forget about the tragedy of December and take advantage of the holiday break.

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to rest. Needless to say, the office party for Quebecor employees, scheduled for December 15, had been canceled and the exchange of greetings was reduced to a minimum.

The uncertainty and anxiety was palpable, and rightly so. No one knew what awaited us or what would happen to the company’s management. But we were all certain of one thing: great changes were in store for the beginning of 1998.

**It was through the media that I learned of the press release issued by the famous Mayo Clinic, where Quebecor's family and management had requested a second medical opinion on Mr. Péladeau's chances of recovery. In the La Presse article, it was mentioned that the doctors at the Hôtel-Dieu were not aware that such a process had been undertaken by the family. They said they were surprised as if their competence was being questioned. According to this second expertise, the patient had no chance of regaining consciousness. As a result, Quebecor management officially announced the composition of the new Board of Directors.**

**The next day, Christmas Day, while watching television, I learned that Pierre Péladeau's death had been officially confirmed at 9:45 p.m. on December 24, 1997. It was also one of his publicly stated wishes: he did not want to be a burden to anyone if an accident happened to him. He totally refused to be an addict. For him, it was inconceivable. He had been very impressed by his mother, Elmière, who had cried for the first time in her life because she was unable to take care of herself, at the age of eighty-three!**

**Those were the saddest holidays of my life. I was mourning in my corner with a few friends.**

**I was apprehensive about going back to work on January 6, and, as I expected, I was immediately asked to go to the office of Raymond Lemay, former First Vice President, who told me bluntly:**

**"You did a good job, but your services are no longer needed."**

**I met with Jean Neveu, the new President, and CEO of Quebecor, to tell him of my interest in another position I could hold in the Quebecor empire. After all, with so many years spent in the heat of the action with the President, I knew I could still be useful in many ways. I was told that the matter would be studied, but that it was better not to count on it.**

It was very difficult to accept, but I didn't blame anyone. It's a normal process in any company to appoint additional assistants when management changes. I fully understood that Pierre-Karl Péladeau wanted to surround himself with new people with whom he would feel comfortable. It was no small task to pick up where his father had left off so suddenly and in a major transition period to boot. He would have to continually endure comparisons between him and his father. I was offered a severance package and the services of the Murray Axmith company to help me reorient myself to another field. I remember the main recommendation made by the counselor at our first meeting when she saw where I came from and whom I had worked with:

“Don't talk about it anymore. If you want to rebuild your life, you have to get rid of the last seven years. That chapter is over and now it's time to turn the page. Try to forget that you were Pierre Péladeau's assistant. His victories in business will hurt you because you were his ally, his soldier. ”

At Quebecor, executives had often advised me to leave my position before Mr. Péladeau died. “Afterwards, it will be very difficult for you to differentiate yourself from him professionally,” said André Gourd, one of the vice presidents, who left the company a year before his boss passed away.

Indeed, during several interviews I obtained in early 1998 in large Quebec companies with which I had collaborated as assistant to Pierre Péladeau, I was asked to tell anecdotes that had occurred during his lifetime. The situation was invariably repeated. They weren't interested in me, but in my former boss, and I heard all kinds of comments about him.

For example, during an interview at Molson, the person who received me asked me :

“How did you manage to work with such an unpleasant person as Pierre Péladeau? ”

I was stunned by the question. I didn't know this Pierre Péladeau. I knew a demanding person, but I also knew that he was human, generous, and a hard worker.

**I finally discovered that ordinary people loved Pierre Péladeau, but in the business world, many people were afraid of him if they didn't hate him.**

**After going through Pierre Péladeau's school, I believe that if you stand up, you are not afraid of anyone. But there are people who act only out of fear.**

**Pierre Péladeau was a tight player in the business. He was tough but fair. He was a keen and skillful competitor. He always said he played to win.**

**I quickly realized that my experience with this character was not an added value to my resume, but a weight to bear. I was like a prisoner of Pierre Péladeau's latest victories.**

**In business, there is no real room for humanism. However, Pierre Péladeau was, in my opinion, one of the rare tycoons to be very tough but humane. He was able to put aside his occupations completely to go and help someone who had called him to his aid.**

**I also remember leaving Quebecor. It was the week of January 5, 1998, which coincided with the beginning of the ice storm. There was a blackout, and it was cold. Everything was dark. I thought the end of the world had come.**

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**Pierre Péladeau - 1991**





**Pierre Péladeau's office at 612 Saint-Jacques in Montreal -1996**





Chair ( bottom at right) where Pierre Péladeau died -  
December 2, 1997



December 2, 1997 concert tickets

## Chapter 2

### First meeting with Pierre Péladeau

I first heard about Pierre Péladeau in 1977 through Normand Girard, a correspondent for the Journal de Montréal in Quebec City. At that time, I was the youngest journalist assigned to the National Assembly. I was barely twenty years old and I had just arrived, freshly arrived, from my native Gaspé Peninsula (1). There were a lot of big media in Quebec City. As we were in the aftermath of the election of a nationalist government, I was not only with the cream of the crop of journalists in the province but also with those from the rest of Canada who came to keep an eye on public enemy number one: the Parti Québécois.

I was on duty at Carleton's CHAU-TV station, which serves the Gaspé Peninsula in eastern Quebec. I was also a correspondent for the radio stations CKRS Jonquière, CHLC Hauterive, and CJMC Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, as well as for the weekly newspapers of the Roland Bellavance group from Rimouski, but I was briefly a correspondent. On Parliament Hill, I rubbed shoulders with Jean-François Lépine, Michel Lacombe, Denis Trudeau, Bernard Saint-Laurent, Gérald Leblanc, Daniel L'Heureux, Bernard Descoteaux, Gilles Lesage, Lysiane Gagnon and occasionally Jacques Guay. The latter was the first National Assembly correspondent for the Journal de Montréal in the 1960s, having previously worked for the newspaper Le Soleil. He became an eminent professor of journalism at Laval University.

As René Lévesque was originally from the same region as me, with Gérard-D. Lévesque, I was all the more happy to



follow their work closely, and impressed to share the field with such great players. I didn't know *Le Journal de Montréal* very well, nor did I know the character Pierre Péladeau. He hadn't really made a name for himself in the Gaspé region when he founded his "largest French daily newspaper in America" during the strike of *La Presse de Montréal*. The Gaspé Peninsula was the territory of the newspaper *Le Soleil* and *Le Journal de Montréal* did not go beyond Quebec City. It wasn't until the creation of *Le Journal de Québec* in 1967 that Gaspésians became aware of Pierre Péladeau's newspapers. Quebecor's newspapers, however, have always remained an urban affair, mainly centralized in Montreal and Quebec City. In 1977, Pierre Péladeau was still considered a dubious character who lacked seriousness and respect for society. *The Journal de Montréal* was a cabbage leaf doomed to failure according to the so-called experts.

Normand Girard often spoke to me about his boss and I was curious to discover this character. Girard, for his part, was considered the éminence grise of the press gallery. He was said to have the best tips, the best exclusives, and the best entries. He was also isolated, always a little out of the way in his vast Parliamentary Gallery office then located in the Parliament Building. He had been assigned the largest office, the corner office, because of his seniority. He was the dean. I figured it was probably to safeguard his contacts that he always kept his door closed.

I was also amazed at the success of *Le Journal de Montréal*, despite the lack of respect from other journalists. In 1978, the circulation of *Le Journal de Montréal* was 260,000 copies, compared to 142,000 for *La Presse*. *Le Soleil* had a circulation of 112,000, *Le Journal de Québec* 107,000, and *Le Devoir* 50,000. I was wondering how Pierre Péladeau managed to impose his newspaper. Girard was constantly telling me about the dynamism of the big boss, his resolute and demanding way of doing business with those around



him. He also told me that people hated him because they were simply jealous of his success.

In those days, e-mail didn't exist. So we wrote letters in the traditional way: typewriter, paper, and post. I addressed a few words to Mr. Péladeau to tell him that I was a young journalist and that I admired his work. And he replied, not to offer me a job but in two parts. Just to thank me.

And he answered me, not to offer me a job, but in two lines, just to thank me. I wasn't really interested in the print media anyway. I was writing to him, inspired by the curiosity Girard was feeding. Television was my passion, as was the environment in which this industry was evolving. Written journalism is a solitary job, whereas with television there's a whole team around you, from the cameraman to the lighting designer to the director, and so on. While print journalism is a very powerful communication tool because it extends the life of a story after it is published, television is a much more exciting and glorifying medium. It reaches people in the privacy of their living room and its reach is comparable to that of the film industry.

I was more impressed by René Lévesque than by Pierre Péladeau. Moreover, René Lévesque had somehow taken a liking to me. I thought it was because of my Gaspesian origins, but I'm convinced today that it was much more because of my cousin, Geneviève Bujold, whom he met when she was in Montreal. He always asked me if I had heard from her, even though I told him that I didn't have much contact with her; she had grown up in Montreal, and I had grown up in the Gaspé Peninsula. He told me about the friendly encounters he had had with her and how much he admired her talent.

I didn't know it yet, but several years later, I would see how much the Prime Minister had in common with Pierre Péladeau. Both were great communicators with a direct style and close to their audience. You have to have seen René Lévesque and Pierre Péladeau give a speech to see the great

resemblance. In fact, Pierre Péladeau later confided to me that he had learned how to give lectures thanks to René Lévesque's advice. One day, while Mr. Péladeau was addressing, without notes, a small audience of Montreal business people, Lévesque, who was present at the time, came to congratulate him and asked him for a copy of his text.

"I don't have one. I went there from my inspiration of the moment. "

Lévesque replied: "You were lucky. One day, you're going to freeze in front of the audience and you're going to look like an idiot. You should always prepare your lectures and have a written text. That's the only way to present a speech and make sure you don't say stupid things. "

Pierre Péladeau felt that Lévesque had been a great help to him that day; he followed his advice for more than thirty years, until his last lecture, a few weeks before his death.

Both Pierre Péladeau and René Lévesque had come a long way to finally rally thousands of people to their respective causes, each in his own sector, one in politics and the other in journalism. They both also had Quebec at heart, the taking control of its economy by Quebecers, and the development and protection of its people's heritage.

Mr. Péladeau admired René Lévesque, whom he had hired at the Journal de Montréal a few years before the 1976 election. Lévesque was destitute and unemployed, and Mr. Péladeau did not hesitate for a moment to offer him a position as a columnist in his daily newspaper. From then on, circulation had skyrocketed. Mr. Péladeau considered the hiring of Jacques Beauchamp in sports in the early years and later René Lévesque as his two best moves at the Journal de Montréal. In both cases, these hires allowed the newspaper to increase its circulation considerably and enhance its credibility, putting it ahead of the others. He said that René Lévesque was the most important, the brightest politician he

knew, the one he admired the most for his integrity and fighting spirit. He had great respect for him.

Pierre Péladeau told me that Lévesque never wanted to get rich from his political positions.

It was honorable, but sad,” said Mr. Péladeau, “because René Lévesque, while he was one of the most important figures in Quebec history, like Maurice Richard or Félix Leclerc, died penniless. ”

Pierre Péladeau was in favor of Quebec nationalism, but financially strong nationalism for individuals and society as a whole. He often said in his lectures that he had explained this at length in Lévesque, on the edge of his pool in Sainte-Adèle.

“Your independence from Quebec will not hold and it will not go anywhere if you do not ensure a solid economic foundation. An independent Quebec without finances would be a banana republic. ”

According to Mr. Péladeau, Lévesque understood, but could not control and channel the passionate fervor of his Parti Québécois colleagues. The events surrounding the end of René Lévesque give some credence to this theory. But René Lévesque died too soon. Otherwise, would he have had the opportunity to change his life and still participate in that of his fellow citizens?

Moreover, Mr. Péladeau had already been approached to run as a candidate in politics because of his nationalist leanings. But he preferred more active and direct participation in the economy by staying in business and creating jobs. This was his *modus vivendi*. Moreover, the timing was not appropriate, as Quebecor was still in its infancy in the 1976's, and the daily presence of the founder at the helm was essential. If he had been offered the same offer in the 1990s, he would have accepted, because he liked to meet people and push them to improve. He gave me concrete proof of this political enthusiasm when I accompanied him to the first Quebec City Economic Summit. Mr. Péladeau returned frustrated and

deeply saddened to find that Premier Lucien Bouchard had not offered him any specific position as the head of the various economic recovery committees in Quebec. I was at his side and I felt that Mr. Péladeau had it in his soul to see himself sidelined while his colleagues such as Jean Coutu, of Jean Coutu Pharmacies, and André Bérard, of the National Bank, had obtained committee chairs. I have never seen Pierre Péladeau as sad as on that day. He felt rejected by his Prime Minister and indirectly by the people of Quebec whom he defended all his life.

When René Lévesque died in 1988, I contacted Pierre Péladeau, because I was aware of his affection for the deceased, to ask him for his contribution to the establishment of a foundation. He had received me and I had explained to him that the goal of this organization was to acquire the house where René Lévesque had grown up in New Carlisle and to turn it into a museum. It was in the papers at the time. He had been tempted, but he would have preferred that the future René-Lévesque foundation also have a presence in Montreal, or at least closer to him. In the end, he declined the invitation, saying that it would be better to entrust the mandate to someone else, for example to a former member of the party or to Corinne Côté-Lévesque, widow of René Lévesque.

In 1979, Bona Arsenault, a former MLA and federal minister, also from the Gaspé Peninsula and with whom I had become friends, suggested that I pursue my career as a journalist at Radio-Canada. According to him, I had all the potential I needed to one day join the French network in Montreal, but I had to first do my training in the regions. According to Arsenault, the ideal region was Moncton, New Brunswick. In fact, he had personal contacts with the management of Radio-Canada in Moncton.

As far away as this city may seem geographically, it was in the middle of Acadia that I discovered the character Pierre Péladeau a little more deeply. I accepted an offer to join



Radio-Canada Moncton as a sports host on television and radio. I also met Jean Perron, the first Canadian field hockey coach to apply a scientific method of coaching players that differed from the instinctive-only method that was always used on all rinks. Perron was at the Université de Moncton during the 1980s. Six years later, he led the Canadiens to the Stanley Cup.

My stint at Radio-Canada Moncton was initially intended to serve as a springboard for my entry into the Mon-Tréalais territory. I dreamed of joining Radio-Canada Montréal, but I quickly realized that this was not the intention of the local management, who wanted to build a strong and long-term regional station with Acadian figures. I fulfilled my one-year contract in Moncton, at the end of which I was hesitant to sign a second one. I decided to take some time to think about my future and I began to publish a few articles in New Brunswick daily newspapers, in both French and English. New Brunswick was a province of about 700,000 people in 1980. There were three English-language daily newspapers and one French-language daily, L'Évangéline, which was founded at the turn of the century in Moncton. My articles were noticed by the management of L'Évangéline and, sometime later, I was offered a position that brought me back to the world of Pierre Péladeau.

At first, I wasn't really convinced that I liked the print media because I liked the electronic media more. In my mind, it was practically magic to see his image entering homes to communicate a news story. The newspaper was like a poor relation next to the power of electronics, but I remembered my former colleague Normand Girard who, thanks to his work in the written word, managed to influence readers' opinions on Quebec politics. I agreed to take that turn in another direction. The written press was a real discovery, almost love at first sight. L'Évangéline was the only French-language daily published in Eastern Canada in a predominantly English-speaking environment and had been for 95 years.

If I had discovered the existence of Pierre Péladeau through Normand Girard in Quebec City, I would have known even more about the character when I was at L'Évangéline in Moncton, thanks to Éric Goguen, who was the editor at the time. He had been one of the first editors of the Journal de Montréal when it was founded in 1964. He came to Moncton by choice and a little by obligation. As he was nearing retirement, he wanted to live in his home region and quietly end his active career there. In Montreal, he had experienced the alcoholism and the sometimes exhausting pace of those who had been at Pierre Péladeau's side. He had decided to give up this rhythm and settle in Acadia. Later, when Goguen passed away in the late 1990s, Pierre Péladeau confided to me that he had been a great journalist and a tireless worker. During the 1980s, Éric Goguen often spoke to me about his experience with Pierre Péladeau. In fact, he often used him as an example to train young journalists like me. I can say that it was under his guidance that I really acquired a passion for the written press. I never realized before how much a written article could provoke as many reactions and have as much influence as a small screen.

Television is a young medium that has tremendous power and influence. Just think of the effect CNN has on the public as soon as it turns its cameras on a live event. Transmitted in this mode, this information - as we know it - is raw, unprocessed, and unanalyzed. But once you've seen a report on the news, if you remember the headlines, you've forgotten the content the next day. The star of a television story is the image. In print media, the headline of the story is the content of the news item being reported. You can also keep a newspaper article and refer to it at any time after it is published. It will never disappear. As they say, "The written word stays". This durability in no way affects the quality of the information as such, because the same rigor is applied to the electronic as to the written word.

As soon as I joined L'Évangéline, Goguen, a former employee of Mr. Péladeau, advised me on the style of my reports. He told me that I had the rhythm of the guys at the Journal de Montréal. He strongly insisted that I should devote myself to writing, claiming that I would enjoy it more than on screen.

We had long conversations to compare the differences in style from one daily newspaper to another, which made the circulation and success of the paper. It was during these moments that he talked to me the most about Pierre Péladeau and what he was doing. He had made the Journal de Montréal.

Long considered a worthless “yellow paper”, Mr. Péladeau's baby has, over the years, made its way into the mainstream and established a firm foothold with readers, publishers, and businesses alike. When Mr. Péladeau founded the newspaper in the early 1960s, he reproduced his Journal de Rosemont with more pages and an important place for artists. The main objective was to occupy the press time of his printing plant. A daily newspaper is the equivalent of five weeklies in a single week. Of course, with Le Journal de Montréal, Mr. Péladeau saw an opportunity to bring a new player to Quebec, and he gambled it all away, to win, as he always did. But, basically, Le Journal de Montréal started simply, one edition at a time and with the main ambition of making its existing equipment for its weeklies profitable.

Pierre Péladeau has always considered a newspaper to be a simple, easy-to-read product. He published a newspaper as if he had been sitting on the corner of a table and talking to people in their kitchen. For him, one day he had to take the reader into account and be read, above all. Mr. Péladeau didn't want to make a newspaper to please himself or a newspaper that looked good. He wanted a newspaper that sells. The high circulation he managed to achieve is a testament to his sound judgment.

All these comparisons and discussions in Moncton with Goguen contributed to my curiosity and interest in Pierre

Péladeau. I began sending him copies of my best work, always with a personal message. I would tell him again how much I admired his work and he would reply faithfully thanking me for my correspondence.

I knew that he had wanted to purchase L'Évangéline (2) in the early 1980s. Goguen told me that Mr. Péladeau came to the newspaper without an appointment. He arrived at the reception desk and asked to see the director. Of course, when Mr. Péladeau arrived somewhere, with or without an appointment, he was received. He would have addressed the director simply by saying :

“I like that, your newspaper. I would like to see your books. ”

A little stunned, the director asked, “But why would I show you our books? ”

“Because I want to buy it,” Mr. Péladeau would have answered just as quickly.

They talked for a while, but the director was adamant: L'Évangéline was not for sale, especially not to a colorful character like Mr. Péladeau and, worse yet, to a Quebecker.

When I think back on that anecdote today, I am sure that Mr. Péladeau may have introduced himself by saying that he wanted to buy the paper and wanted to see the books, but I doubt very much that it was a fortuitous and not premeditated visit. I would tend to believe that his former employee Goguen, who was always loyal to his boss from the early hours, had asked him to come to Moncton and take a look at L'Évangéline. Mr. Péladeau never refused to look at a good business case. Didn't he buy his first newspaper the same way? Raymonde Chopin, who was to become his wife, had told him that Le Journal de Rosemont might be for sale. But she had also told the owner of the weekly, which, by the way, hadn't been published for three months, that there might be a buyer.

Whether or not all the details Goguen recounted for the story of L'Évangéline and for Mr. Péladeau are true or not, this possibility does not prevent us from seeing what Mr.



Péladeau was like when he wanted something. He had a gift for sniffing out good deals and acting on his intuition. At the time he had come to buy L'Évangéline, the Acadian daily newspaper was having financial difficulties, but it was still in business. An active daily newspaper can easily be reoriented and the administration streamlined. L'Évangéline had its own press and a building that was difficult to administer. An acquisition by Pierre Péladeau would have allowed L'Évangéline to have

access to the efficient machine that was Quebecor.

In 1982, when it was forced to close its doors after 95 years of advertising, its sudden and surprising demise made headlines in New Brunswick's English-language newspapers. It was a bit like the failure of the Acadian people to keep their daily newspaper alive.

L'Évangéline's advertising revenues had dropped significantly with the closure of many businesses, victims of the recession. Already in financial difficulty, the Acadian Daily newspaper ended in a labor dispute. Negotiations between the employees' union and the bosses were going nowhere and, after two weeks, the doors were closed. The closure, which was supposed to be temporary, was permanent.

It was a heartbreaking end and a loss for the francophone community in that part of the country. I came up with the idea of contacting Pierre Péladeau to make him aware of the situation and to see if he would give us a hand in getting the newspaper back on its feet. Éric Goguen thought it was a good idea. He said, "If you don't do it, I will. "

We then drew up a recovery plan. We advocated restarting L'Évangéline and instilling in it a resolute marketing culture, a culture à la Pierre Péladeau. We wrote our plan and then rushed it by courier to the potential savior on St. Jacques Street in Montreal.

Unfortunately, what we thought was the solution failed. Mr. Péladeau replied that he was no longer interested, and simply wished us good luck with our project. Did he refuse to go

back to work because he had already been told no once? That's what I thought at the time. But in hindsight, I think he had done his research and concluded that it was no longer a good deal. The newspaper market was also in flux, and the pace of the 1970s was not the same in 1982.

The Acadian newspaper was later to reopen thanks to sponsors and grants from different levels of government, but it didn't last long. Initially re-launched under the name *Le Matin* and directed by Acadian Charles D'Amours, the daily did not survive and the former director of *Le Nouvelliste de Trois-Rivières* did not win his bet. *Le Matin* moved into the former Eaton's warehouses in Moncton and suffered the same fate as the chain's stores. In the end, it was a small daily newspaper, *L'Acadie nouvelle*, based in Caraquet, that won the day, but without much financing. It is still published today.

*L'Acadie nouvelle* is a bit like Pierre Péladeau's plans. In spite of the lack of means at the beginning of his projects, he managed to impose himself by being close to the people and his market. In fact, I remember a remark made by the promoter of *Le Matin* who told me that he wanted to make the Acadian newspaper a real tool for cultural revival in Acadia. Mr. Péladeau had already heard the same speech in Montreal when the elite of Quebec was saying that its newspapers were not very high class. He replied to his critics that the elite liked to make a newspaper in the living rooms of society for the self-righteous. He preferred to make a newspaper for the people. *L'Acadie nouvelle*, like *Le Journal de Montréal* and *Le Journal de Québec*, are testimony to this principle "à la Péladeau".

"If television reaches people in their living room, a newspaper must reach people at their kitchen table. "

Once again, I found myself at a crossroads. Should I continue in journalism? Should I change my vocation? Should I move to another part of the country?

In 1983, the communications and media community in particular was beginning to suffer from budget and personnel restrictions. Hiring was almost non-existent. You had to work as a freelancer or else resign yourself to conditions that I found unacceptable.

Finally, one of the three co-owners of L'Évangéline, the Fédération des caisses populaires acadiennes, entrusted me with the task of relaunching the public relations and marketing of its network of eighty-eight caisses populaires. I continued to write a few reports in English, but it was the meeting with Brian Mulroney that brought me even closer to Pierre Péladeau.

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**Pierre Péladeau - 1991**





**Pierre Péladeau and Journal de Montréal's peddlers**



**René Lévesque and Pierre Péladeau - 1985**





**Bernard Bujold - National Assembly of Quebec - 1977**



**René Lévesque - 1991**





Bernard Bujold - L'Évangéline - 1982



**Pierre Péladeau - 1991**

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## **Chapter 3**

### **The Gateway to Ottawa**

**I first met Brian Mulroney and his wife Mila in the summer of 1983, when he had just won the leadership convention of the Conservative Party of Canada. He would eventually run for office in Central Nova County, Nova Scotia. We quickly established good business contacts. I liked his drive and innovative ideas.**

**I used to send him clippings and copies of articles I wrote in various New Brunswick publications.**

**A situation that wouldn't be accepted in the major centers, I was director of public relations for the Fédération des Caisses populaires acadiennes and I continued to work as a journalist on an occasional basis. In the regions, in cities with medium or small populations, the overlap between journalism and public relations is accepted.**

**Brian Mulroney and Pierre Péladeau are strangely similar both in terms of career path and personality. In my opinion, the two characters have so much in common that one might sometimes think they grew up together. Their story follows the same path.**

**Pierre Péladeau founded Le Journal de Montréal on June 15, 1964. Brian Mulroney's arrival in Montreal as a lawyer was around the same time, in the spring of 1964. As a young law graduate from Laval University, Brian Mulroney had agreed to come and meet the partners of the prestigious law firm Howard, Cate, Ogilvy. His friend Bernard Roy, also a young graduate of Laval University, had strongly recommended him. Brian Mulroney accepted the job offer from the Montreal firm,**

but like Pierre Péladeau on his first try, Mr. Mulroney failed his initial bar exam, which he had to retake a second time.

The death of their respective fathers will also have a significant impact on Pierre Péladeau and Brian Mulroney. In Mr. Péladeau's case, seeing his father Henri Péladeau disappear in financial failure was a significant event that followed him all his life and influenced his need for recognition from the business community. Ben Mulroney's death was a great sadness to his son Brian, who attributed his failure at the Bar to this event.

Pierre Péladeau loved to read newspapers and magazines. You should have seen him when he was in his office or out in the street, constantly on the lookout for publications within his reach. Often he would steal the newspaper from the restaurant or the waiting room to read it in the car. Mr. Péladeau wanted to know everything and he read a lot. Brian Mulroney has the same passion for newspapers, and he likes to be aware of everything that is written both at home and abroad.

Brian Mulroney was the lawyer for the Journal de Montréal during the first negotiations of the collective agreements. But he didn't come to Quebecor because he was close to Mr. Péladeau or was his friend. Initially, the collaboration between the two men was professional. In Montreal, the young Mulroney became a specialist in negotiating collective agreements for newspapers in general, including La Presse. If Mulroney had a mentor, it was Paul Desmarais, not Pierre Péladeau.

Paul Desmarais appreciated the character of the young Montreal lawyer from their first meeting and often invited him to his home. Mr. Desmarais also entrusted Mr. Mulroney with several mandates outside the daytime sector, including that of the 1971 bus conflict. Mr. Mulroney's negotiating strategy was simple and always based on two elements. First, he defined the problem of the company in question, and second, he analyzed the personalities of the two leaders,

management and labor, with whom he had to reach a consensus. He did not know how to

It's not enough to know a company well, you also have to know the men at the helm.

Pierre Péladeau always acted the same way. He never approached a problem solely in a Cartesian manner. He always considered the human side of the whole matter. Mr. Péladeau will tell me that, deep down, he knew nothing about printing or newspaper publishing. His specialty was to know how to surround himself with the best people and to motivate them to accomplish their tasks beyond their personal limits.

Mr. Péladeau confided to me: "I am a motivator of men. The first thing I analyze in a case is human capital. What motivates such and such? Money, power, fame, sex, or something else? Once I have this information, I can negotiate the case on the table and most importantly, win it. "

Brian Mulroney is also a leader of men and a brilliant communicator. He listens attentively to his interlocutor and always looks him straight in the eye. That's what Pierre Péladeau did. When he spoke to you, he would look deeply at you, and nothing else existed around you.

Another characteristic that brings Péladeau and Mulroney together is their desire to be in action rather than in an office. Pierre Péladeau liked to visit his factories or his newspapers. He liked to meet his employees and feel the action in the field. He said that you don't win a war sitting in an office but standing on the battlefield. Brian Mulroney always wanted to be in the field when he was a young lawyer or later when he became Prime Minister.

Finally, the two men were similar on one last point: their alcohol problem, which they managed to overcome.

I was in Baie-Comeau on the evening of September 4, 1984, when Brian Mulroney won a historic election victory. He elected 211 members of parliament out of a possible 282. I was very happy to see the sweep of the Conservatives at the end of that election campaign because I had been actively



involved in the Acadian Peninsula of New Brunswick It was memorable. In Acadia, the Conservatives had won nine out of ten counties.

It was euphoria in Baie-Comeau. I remember that Mr. Mulroney's immediate entourage had predicted a victory, but not on this scale. Brian Mulroney had been the favorite candidate ahead of John Turner, and he ran his campaign by saying that he wanted to make the government machine profitable. We will also remember the famous television debate where Mr. Mulroney told Mr. Turner: "You have the choice...". "He was talking about the political nations that Trudeau had announced before he left. Turner claimed that he had no choice but to accept them. The outcome of the election campaign would really have been decided at that point, and many attribute the victory to Mulroney's performance in the debate.

My involvement in the election campaign had generated some interest in my skills and I was soon invited to join a cabinet ministerial as an assistant. The energy that Mr. Mulroney knew how to put to work made me want to work for his team. My first job in government was with Elmer MacKay, Member of Parliament for Central Nova, Nova Scotia. He had given up his seat to Brian Mulroney in the 1983 by-election. In 1984, MacKay became Solicitor General. But after a first partial cabinet shuffle in early 1985, I joined the Prime Minister's Office as Communications Assistant. My duties consisted mainly of liaising between reporters in the Press Gallery and the Prime Minister's Office. I also accompanied Mr. Mulroney to the famous press briefings outside his office in the House of Commons building. In Ottawa, I met with several of my former colleagues from the Quebec City Parliamentary Gallery, who are now working in the Press Gallery.

**Press in Ottawa.**

Since my beginnings in 1976, I had discovered the power of the press. In Ottawa, I discovered the power of politics. I

initially thought that the power of politics was quite equivalent to the power of business. But in the years following the 1984 victory, I was able to see that between political power and business power, especially with Quebecor, there are as many differences as between day and night.

When you are in politics, anyone can approach you and ask you questions about your work and its results. The politician must answer them in a transparent manner; it is his duty as a public figure because he is at the service of the nation. In a certain sense, the life of the politician becomes almost the life of the State. It is necessary to continually manage exchanges with the community and try to achieve group consensus. Personal decisions are very rarely possible.

Brian Mulroney came to Ottawa with a strong management background, gained with the Iron Ore mining company. He came to power with the goal of privatizing Crown corporations. However, he had to quickly realize that this kind of decision takes much longer than in the private sector and involves countless people in the chain of government. In a private company like Quebecor, if Pierre Péladeau tells his vice presidents that from now on we are changing course, there is no one who can contradict or oppose him, except the shareholders. This was my argument in 1991 when I prepared the communication strategies for Mr. Péladeau.

The capital and assets of a private company belong to the owners and shareholders of a company, while the capital and assets of the state belong to the citizens. This is a major difference that must never be forgotten.

In press relations at the political level, journalists are immediately opposed and try to contradict what they are told. In business, the journalist does not confront the president of a company in the same way, and, a priori, he accepts the explanations that the latter gives him. The president of a private company is not accountable, unlike a public man. The

**real power is, in my opinion, that of the private man. Political power is illusory.**

**Even taking into account this fundamental difference between the public and private sectors, I believe that Pierre Péladeau and Brian Mulroney were very similar in their ideology and management styles. Both men believed in the private sector and in action. Mr. Péladeau, as I later discovered, could react extremely quickly to any situation. So did Brian Mulroney. Both men also worked passionately for their respective causes, one for Quebecor and the other for Canada.**

**On a personal and human level, Mr. Péladeau projected the same energy vibrations as Mr. Mulroney. Both of them, and I could see it when I walked into a room with them, their charisma permeated the entire space. Both men also had an unusual energy, more than normal in terms of the amount of work and hours spent on the task at hand.**

**When I started working for Mr. Péladeau in 1991, the resemblance with Mr. Mulroney struck me at the leadership level. When an employee presented them with a problem, they also had to come up with solutions. Employees respected Pierre Péladeau and Brian Mulroney and in both cases, there was a kind of fear or anxiety to do the right thing.**

**As a lawyer, Brian Mulroney negotiated the first collective agreement for the Journal de Montréal in the late 1960s in a style he still maintains today. His style has allowed him to settle several collective agreements. He does not accept defeat. As with Mr. Péladeau, he must win. Mr. Mulroney always does his research work before starting. Like Mr. Péladeau, he wants to know everything about the file. Information is the centerpiece of the whole strategy.**

**During the years 1984 to 1988, I kept in regular contact with Pierre Péladeau. I attended conferences when I had the opportunity, and sent him personal messages from time to time. However, I never served as an official intermediary**

between Pierre Péladeau and Brian Mulroney. My relationship with each was private and personal.

In 1988, after a stint at Canada Post Corporation, I left the political environment to become a private communications consultant. It was in this capacity that I became professionally close to Mr. Péladeau. I carried out several market analyses in the newspaper publishing industry and we kept in regular and sustained correspondence because Quebecor was often one of the partners solicited in my various projects, either directly or indirectly, as a potential investor.

One of my first projects was to analyze the situation of Le Droit newspaper in Ottawa and to propose a corporate strategy aimed at resolutely occupying the national capital market. In early 1988, Le Droit was in serious financial trouble: it was emerging from a strike. It was experiencing the same problems as L'Évangéline, another newspaper which, like Le Droit, was originally created to defend the French fact in its region rather than to make a profit. However, new restructuring options had to be found. Is it necessary to mention that the owner was Conrad Black? It is easy to understand, without having to elaborate, that he did not intend to laugh about profitability issues.

Mr. Black had purchased Le Droit and Le Soleil from Jacques Francoeur at the end of 1986. Peter G. White, Mr. Black's right-hand man, and partner, had met with the employees and told them about the new business strategy, which was to streamline as much as possible. The reaction was rather bad, as the seven unions went on strike for six months in February 1988.

After the strike was settled, I carried out a restructuring plan which I presented to the law department. The management liked my suggestions, but they preferred a longer time frame than the one I had proposed. There was even talk of selling the newspaper. So I prepared a second plan, with the collaboration of another consultant, in which I advocated the



**purchase of Le Droit by Mr. Péladeau. There were discussions between Mr. Péladeau and Mr. Black, but nothing came of the deal.**

**Eventually, Le Droit's management made structural changes to the company, retaining only the newspaper's main base. First, they sold the commercial printing plant, which was profitable but did not fit well with the company's mission; then they moved the Novalis subsidiary, which published Prions en Église, among other things, to Montreal; they changed the format of Le Droit newspaper to a tabloid; and they also moved the office by selling the building, as Le Devoir later did. Le Droit had its own presses, but they were not profitable. The solution was to contract print. This was a more economical and less cumbersome solution. Le Soleil had already understood this as Le Droit would understand it in the late 1980s.**

**Subsequently, I did an analysis of the situation at Le Devoir. I also recommended that the newspaper be more active in the community and I suggested to director Benoit Lauzière that Pierre Péladeau and Quebecor play a specific role in the revival.**

**I suggested: "You should use their advertising sales technique to be more present in the community. "**

**I had contacted Mr. Péladeau to ask him what he thought about it and he was open to the whole idea.**

**I had also proposed a fundraising campaign involving the other major metropole dailies. Unfortunately, nothing came to fruition, except that, subsequently, the Le Devoir building was sold to Quebecor.**

**I have completed several other projects for smaller newspapers, but I came knocking at Pierre Péladeau's door with a project that concerned him personally: starting a third daily newspaper after Le Journal de Montréal and Le Journal de Québec, namely Le Journal de Hull.**

**I led this project head-on in 1989 with Louis M. Bergeron, one of the first sports journalists at Le Journal de Montréal to**

travel with the Canadiens and the Expos. Bergeron left Le Journal de Montréal shortly after the arrival of Jacques Beauchamp. He knew the Outaouais region well, and he had relaunched the three weekly Le Droit weeklies when the owner was Jacques Francœur, a well-known personality in the daytime world. He notably ran the weekly Dimanche Matin.

Bergeron and I wanted a new daily newspaper to replace Le Droit. We had designed a very precise business plan so that Mr. Péladeau would adhere to it, as well as other investors in the region.

Pierre Péladeau had agreed to receive our document and acknowledged receipt by telephone. He told me that he would look at it very carefully and that our project was obviously well-prepared. A few days later, he phoned me to ask me to clarify certain figures. But after a few weeks, he wrote back to us, saying no, contrary to our expectations and hopes. We were convinced that he would come on board with us and that our newspaper would form a trio with his two other dailies in Montreal and Quebec City: same format, same sales dynamics, same graphic presentation. We also wanted to set up our newspaper in Hull, on the Quebec side of the border, with Gatineau as its territory and a larger pool of francophones, the same kind of market as in Quebec City. Le Droit would have liked to imitate us, but the Ontario unions legally prevented such a move from a company incorporated in their province.

Mr. Péladeau was the right man for the job in our view, but he was not completely convinced that there was a financial market to generate enough advertising revenue. It should be noted that Le Journal de Montréal at the time had a circulation of some 5,000 copies in the Outaouais. In addition, in Ontario, Francophones read more of the English-language press. He had already suffered serious setbacks in the English-speaking market, in Philadelphia and more

recently in Montreal with The Daily News, and he was not comfortable with the idea of touching it again.

But he had looked at the project very carefully and thought about the situation and finally made his decision. We presented him with all the essential elements with comparative tables. The work was very neat in terms of research, and I think Louis M. Bergeron and I caught his attention. Bergeron is still in the Outaouais region, where he is the publisher of Outaouais Affaires, a monthly newspaper in Gatineau.

Although he did not finance the project for the new daily newspaper, Pierre Péladeau had been able to judge my personal way of working, and he took note of that. In fact, he told me in 1991 that he had offered me a position as assistant to the president as a result of the efforts I had put into my 1989 project.

Later, I participated in an economic mission to Paris, again in the area of publications, for the French economic delegation in Ottawa. I had to identify the economic players in Paris in the newspaper and minitel sector and try to establish links with Outaouais companies.

As usual, I sent a copy of my report to Péladeau, telling him that there were great opportunities in Europe. I sent him my document as a courtesy. He thanked me by saying that he liked it.

I was convinced that I could help Pierre Péladeau in his weekly newspapers and contribute my ideas.

to improve its efficiency. Following a written proposal from me on this subject, he contacted me to invite me to the annual planning meeting of his weekly newspapers on August 2, 1991. Our written correspondence became more abundant from that time on.

The leaders in the meeting made it clear to me that they were motivated by and respected their leader. I could see that Quebecor's success was due to Pierre Péladeau's strong motivational spirit, a spirit that is not complicated and is

**based on common sense in the use of praise and criticism, but which is very effective when it is well applied.**

**Shortly afterward, on August 16, there was a meeting with the management of the Journal de Montréal. Mr. Péladeau had also invited me to this annual review meeting as an observer. I then sent him my remarks and recommendations in a small written report: “Le Journal de Montréal could still improve: have a single front page headline, be more present in the community, different from the others, unique, urban rather than regional. ”**

**The Journal de Montréal had at one time tried to copy Le Soleil and be regional. In my opinion, it had to be above all urban. At one point, there had been a tendency on the part of several major newspapers to become regional. Le Soleil, among other things, had offices all over eastern Quebec.**

**During these two brainstorming meetings, I noticed that Mr. Péladeau was acting like a winner. There was, of course, a machine behind him that was powerful and that moved the whole structure forward, but he was a very dynamic character deep inside himself, and in a natural way. It was said of him, however, that he was not open to the advice of others and that he listened only to himself. On the contrary, he was always sympathetic to people who offered him solutions to problems, and he could change his mind when he realized that he was wrong. Certainly, he had a strong philosophy about running a business: solution, action, and result. “You have a problem, you have to do something about it, you find the solution, and then you get a result. If that doesn’t work, you try something else. You can’t just sit back and do nothing. ”**

**Pierre Péladeau would not let himself be approached by just anyone professionally. He could throw away what was sent to him if he didn’t like the sender or the way the work was presented, but he was always interested in listening and giving his time when he met someone with new and dynamic ideas. He did this with me, but also with many other people.**



How many times have I seen him encourage young people to go into business and offer his help in advising them? A good 100 people have benefited from his support in this way. He liked to help people who were helping themselves. Entrepreneurship was the best quality he could see in anyone.

I noticed very early on in my first experiences with Mr. Péladeau that the people who worked with him all had the same appreciation of the character. I have never seen anyone who worked for him be unhappy or hate him. It was people who were not close to him who criticized him. I quickly understood that it was out of jealousy that people sometimes spoke badly of him. I figured that they simply hadn't been able to seduce him and that they hated him a little because of that failure. Personally, I discovered a man completely different from what the legend said about him. Let's not fool ourselves. For Mr. Péladeau to build Le Journal de Montréal, there had to be people who loved him and supported him. All the people who worked with him were able to appreciate the character at his true value, and above all were motivated by his presence at the helm. For my part, I discovered this character and I too wanted to join his team.

I had enjoyed working with Mr. Mulroney; I told myself that I would have more with a man like Mr. Péladeau, because, in addition, he was in the field I loved: newspapers.

Several years later, a young student from Chicoutimi asked him how I became his assistant. He replied:

"It all started with a continuous correspondence. "

Anyone who has experienced this will be able to testify to it: Mr. Péladeau loved receiving letters. He made a point of reading all his mail and following up quickly, often by telephone. When answering a call, it was not surprising to hear his trumpet at the other end: "Hello, this is Pierre Péladeau. "Of course, the caller had to touch his or her heartstrings, otherwise the request would end up in the recycling garbage can.

**In early 1991, I wrote him another personal letter offering my services to Quebecor. “I would like to join you for a period of five years to gain solid management experience. In five years, I’ll be leaving and people will say I’m a guy who went to Péladeau’s school. ”**

**At the end of a day at my Ottawa office, when nothing exciting was happening, I was about to leave when the phone rang :**

**“Hello! This is Pierre Péladeau. I wish you would come and see me. I can’t promise you anything, but I might have something for you. ”**

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Pierre Péladeau - 1996





**Brian Mulroney at the inauguration of the new building Le Journal de Montréal - 1985**



**Brian and Mila Mulroney - Baie-Comeau - September 4, 1984**





**Bernard Bujold in the gardens of the Canadian Parliament - 1984**



**Bernard Bujold - Office of the Prime Minister of Canada - 1985**





**Bernard Bujold in Paris - September 1991**

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## Chapter 4

### 612 Saint-Jacques Street

Pierre Péladeau had given me an appointment at 9:00 a.m. on October 8, 1991, on the 13th floor of the Quebecor Building, located at 612 Saint-Jacques Street West, in Montreal. I had left my residence in Orleans, a suburb of Ottawa, Ontario, at 6 a.m. in case I was delayed by traffic. I wanted to arrive at least half an hour before the meeting with the President of Quebecor.

Mr. Péladeau arrived at the office at 10:30 a.m., a quick but calm pace. Seeing me sitting at the reception desk, he smiled at me. He stopped and looked at his watch and said, looking falsely surprised:

“Mr. Bernard, good morning! Am I late? ”

He continued walking towards his office and asked me to wait until he took off his coat. About five minutes later, Micheline Bourget, his secretary, whom I had already greeted earlier, came to ask me to follow her. We went directly to Pierre Péladeau’s office. It was a very large corner office, narrow but at least six meters long, with stylish furniture. On the walls hung paintings signed by big names. I recognized two of them: Jean-Paul Lemieux and Marc-Aurèle Fortin. The view from there is over the Stock Exchange Tower to the north and the office of Paul Desmarais (Power Corporation) to the east.

Before inviting me to sit down, he said to me:

“Would you like a coffee?”

I accepted and he asked for one for himself as well. We were barely sitting down when he said, “Okay, tell me in five minutes what you can do for me.

I had prepared my options and, at his request, I had already sent him a letter explaining what I would do if he hired me. In response to his question, I told him verbally, in a few minutes, that I would be comfortable working either as a journalist at the Journal de Montréal, as an editor in one of its newspapers, or as a public relations manager at Quebecor’s head office.

He was interested in the latter.

“And what could you do in public relations for Quebecor? ”

I began by describing how I interpreted all the problems I had been experiencing over the last twelve months, a situation that began with the publication of a report that L’Actualité magazine had devoted to him. In my opinion, he lacked rigor in managing his contacts with journalists. It was possible to build a public relations strategy that would showcase him while protecting him. Of course, as a communications consultant, I had my theories on how to manage communications in a large company. I had already shared them with him several times in the past. I considered it possible, and even necessary, to manage public relations in the same way as any other area of administration, such as finance, human resources, or sales.

One year earlier, an article published in the magazine L’Actualité 1 shook the rue Saint-Jacques and, in more particular, Pierre Péladeau’s entourage. The journalist, Jean Blouin, had drawn a portrait of Pierre Péladeau that was titled:

“Péladeau spitting image - No businessman is better known in Quebec. He is either admired or hated. Legend has swallowed up reality. We feel the need to unfurl this decor. ”

If this article wanted to present Pierre Péladeau as raw as he could be when he let himself go - and it was easy to provoke him - we can say that it was successful. His lines were



quoted without leaving any room for interpretation and his sentences were sometimes strewn with swear words and outright insults. The journalist had not written a complacent article. Many quotes and details may have been intended to give an accurate portrayal of Pierre Péladeau, but it was as if the negative aspects of the character had been emphasized overshadowing the positive ones. For a public relations operation, it can be said that Mr. Péladeau had completely missed the boat.

It was two passages in particular in this report that aroused great anger on the part of almost the entire Jewish community in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada. The journalist quotes Mr. Péladeau as follows:

“I am anti-person, I am pro-Quebec. I have never reproached the Journal for devoting an article to a Jew because he was a Jew, but because he was not French-speaking. I have great respect for Jews, but I find that they take up too much space. I want first of all that we help our people who need it much more 2! ”

He will also say further on that he admires Hitler for his iron will and his discipline of work, a discipline that, according to Mr. Péladeau, was found in all Germans.

The Jewish community did not appreciate these two comments. Indeed, it is one thing for a public figure to make a statement, but the message still has to get out. In this case, one can say that it quickly spread throughout the community concerned. Yet the magazine L'Actualité is not a tool for anti-Jewish propaganda. It was, and still is, an excellent publication that is in some ways the French version of Toronto's Maclean's magazine. L'Actualité is a bimonthly magazine distributed mainly in Quebec, with a circulation of about 191,000 copies.

When Pierre Péladeau interviewed for this magazine, he had thought of addressing French-speaking Quebec, and he wanted to show his nationalist leanings once again. The journalist, Mr. Blouin, probably wanted to direct his subject in

a different way, and so directed his article towards the more colorful aspects of the person. What the editor of L'Actualité reported was not false, but badly presented, without the context.

If Pierre Péladeau had already been accused of sensationalism and, at times, of taking advantage of personalities to increase his circulation, he was the victim in this report published on April 15, 1990, four days after his 65th birthday.

The effect of these remarks was catastrophic for him and for Quebecor. Mr. Péladeau's reaction time and response to the article did nothing to lessen its impact either. Indeed, it seems that no one at Quebecor, and in particular Pierre Péladeau himself, had read the article once it was published to check whether each quote was reproduced in the right context.

The ensuing outcry from the Jewish community was like a groundswell that could not be stopped once it was unleashed. The leaders of the Jewish community had come together and decided to put the ungrateful Pierre Péladeau to the test. This challenge led to the cancellation of some important advertising and printing contracts, among other things. It was a boycott in good standing.

Mr. Péladeau was shaken by the reaction, and he wondered at length why he had stumbled so much in the management of his image. He had always wanted to send a message of encouragement to his family; why did he get such a response? He did not hate the Jews. Rather, he deplored the fact that Quebecers did not know how to imitate them. He had wanted to defend his fellow men as Jewish leaders do for theirs. The only special attention he paid to the Jewish community was his solidarity. Those who frequented or worked with Mr. Péladeau had often heard him use Jews as an example of mutual aid, support and complementarity. He had a real admiration for their business sense and, according to him, Quebecers would occupy more space on the financial

scene if they copied their management style. He translated this thought to the journalist in the following terms:

**“If Jews take up too much space in the economy, it is because Quebecers do not take up enough. ”**

That was his explanation, but the journalist had highlighted only part of his remark.

At that time, in 1990, I did try, on a personal basis, to help Pierre Péladeau deal with this crisis; I even defended him publicly. I did not act as a consultant, but out of friendship and above all out of admiration for the character. I wrote a remark that I sent to the main Quebec dailies, including La Presse, as well as to L'Actualité. It was obviously a drop in the bucket, but I stood up and took a stand. I tried to explain how I saw the character and why he should not be crucified like that.

L'Actualité refused to publish my comment, but Jean Paré, editor-in-chief, explained to me in a letter that the magazine recognized his mistake and that they preferred to close the file.

Excerpt from my text addressed to Quebec's major daily newspapers:

**«... Criticisms of Mr. Pierre Péladeau's personal ideology, as advertised in the magazine L'Actualité, are false and the true and great value of this Quebec man of affaires is poorly understood.**

The personal vision of Mr. Péladeau, a vision that belongs to him, is being attacked and no attention is being paid to his great achievements. Mr. Pierre Péladeau has succeeded in creating a unique Quebec economic giant whose success is a model for all Francophones in the country. Today, Quebecor is a company with sales of over two billion dollars and employs more than 18,000 people. However, this Quebec achievement began in a very humble way and Mr. Péladeau's fortune does not date back to previous generations, as the

**entrepreneur started with only \$1,500, some twenty-six years ago. That's what we should be fighting for and what we should be applauding rather than booing about. - May 1990 -**

**Excerpt from my text addressed to the magazine Le 30:**

**«... The special report on Mr. Pierre Péladeau published in the June 1990 issue of Le 30 magazine is interesting in several respects about the work of journalists. However, the special report did not really answer the main question: was the case treated properly and fairly by the press or did partisanship and sensationalism dominate?»**

**The first evidence of the lack of fairness according to this case is the manner in which the magazine L'Actualité to publish his correction. Rather than presenting a correction - retraction - in the pages of the magazine itself, they preferred to use the public square and issue a press release on the Telbec network.**

**In my opinion, it would have been better not to issue a press release, but to present the true facts in the next edition of L'Actualité. It may be said that the coverage obtained through the use of Telbec is broader, but this is precisely what created the lack of journalistic professionalism when we wanted to produce a media debate instead of simply re-establishing the facts.**

**Moreover, despite all the public attention the affair has received, the publication of a retraction in the very pages of the magazine would still be essential today, as columnist Jean Pelletier mentioned, for those who will later re-read L'Actualité, historians or archivists, and who will then want to retell the history of our times. If nothing appears in the archives of L'Actualité, the debate will be all the more complicated and false [...] - June 20, 1990 -**

**Pierre Péladeau listened to me without interruption as I explained to him how I saw my job at Quebecor. I was**



encouraged to see that he was attentive to what I had to say. My presentation was meant to interest him.

What I recommended for Quebecor was relatively simple. In my view, we needed to establish mechanisms for monitoring the media as they exist elsewhere, particularly in the political sector. You have to make sure that you read the press article immediately after it is published, but above all, you have to choose strategically the media outlet(s) to which you give interviews. Also, the press secretary should always be present during the interview with the president and ensure that the reporter has interpreted and understood the meaning of the answers given after the meeting. Obtain the date of publication of the interview and make arrangements to obtain a copy promptly. Most importantly, keep a record of the conversation between the president and the reporter. As a press secretary, it is essential to have a tape recorder and to record the interview so that you can challenge or confirm the interpretation given by the reporter and the media he or she represents. If the interview is important and time is available, it may be useful to have the recording transcribed for reference. This was a common practice when I worked for Brian Mulroney.

After about ten minutes, Pierre Péladeau admitted to me that perhaps he had not protected himself sufficiently over the last few years; perhaps there had been a bit of negligence on his part and I was probably right in my remarks. Quebecor was a company that had grown enormously and rapidly, and it was necessary to have monitoring mechanisms that were previously useless.

So he asked me very directly:

“How much are you going to cost me for everything you’re proposing? ”

I mentioned a price that was neither too high nor too low, very much in line with the market. “It’s settled! When are you available to start?

- But this afternoon, if you want... ”

**As he thought of everything, he added:**

**“What title do you want to write on your business card? ”**

**He concluded the conversation by telling me that he was offering me a trial period. He was giving “us” three months on either side to see if the chemistry worked. He said, “It’s make or break. “After that time, if he was satisfied with my work, and I was satisfied with the atmosphere at Quebecor, the deal was done. If not, the deal would be over, but we would still be good friends.**

**At Mr. Péladeau’s request, my first mandate was to write a brief that he wanted to present on behalf of Quebecor to the Parliamentary Commission on Artists in Quebec, which was to be held in the following weeks. He felt that Quebecor, like many other companies, was doing a lot for Quebec artists and that we needed to make this fact known to the Quebec government.**

**The first day, I had no office. He set me up in his conference room, a kind of small lounge, and he told me that I would be in André Gourd’s office the next morning (he had left the company some time before). Gourd had held a senior management position and the office was almost bigger in size than the big boss’s office. It was intimidating to set up there.**

**I was not yet sitting in the conference room when he arrived with a young woman.**

**“I’ll introduce you to Dominique Vincent, your assistant. ”**

**I didn’t know then that I had one.**

**The next day, on my first official day, I ran into Pierre-Karl Péladeau who obviously didn’t know who I was.**

**“Who are you? “he asked me, intrigued.**

**I answered that I was his father’s assistant.**

**He turned around without asking any questions, simply saying:**

**“Ah well! Hello. ”**

**A few minutes later, I saw Raymond Lemay.**

**“Who are you? “he also asked me.**

**I eagerly introduced myself.**

**“Ah, well! He has a deputy now! “he grumbled as he walked away.**

**I understood then that the idea of hiring me was Pierre Péladeau’s own. The president had decided, and I had been accepted without any discussion or consultation with his vice presidents.**

**I immediately took my role very seriously in the development of the brief. I wanted a document that was complete. During the first week, I began to familiarize myself with the various publications and affiliates related to artists. I visited Distribution Trans-Canada and met the staff with Chantale Reid, then director of this major record distribution company. Then I met with the publishers of art magazines and newspapers.**

**After a few days, my office was quickly flooded with documents and boxes of archives. Dominique Vincent, my assistant, assisted me in the preparation of the brief. There were files and papers spread out everywhere. Mr. Péladeau came to see how I was doing. He stood on the doorstep and watched this vast display of papers and boxes.**

**“You look very organized my man! It’s going to be a beautiful document. ”**

**In order to introduce me to the way he works with the managers of his celebrity magazines, he asked me to accompany him to a meeting of the weekly Le Lundi where he was to discuss with the management staff. At the beginning of the meeting, he was presented with mock-ups of the next edition. His reaction wasn’t long in coming. He simply grabbed the canvases and threw them in the direction of the wastebasket, shouting :**

**“It’s worthless. You’re going to do this to me again, and fast!”**

**I had just witnessed one of his legendary tantrums for the first time. The publisher and the chief editor were not leading the way... At the end of the baptism, Mr. Péladeau left the**

meeting to go to an appointment, and it was Le Lundi editor who drove me back in his vehicle to 612 St. Jacques Street. Don't worry," he told me, looking at the traffic around the corner. You won't necessarily last long. At Quebecor, you have to be careful and I saw other assistants who didn't last long. "

I don't know if he wanted to humiliate me because I had witnessed the scene that had just happened or give me some advice, but some time later the editor was thanked for his services. As far as I am concerned, I "lasted" until the end of Pierre Péladeau.

I understood very quickly that Mr. Péladeau liked simplicity in everything. We had to be clear, concise, brief. I could draw up very detailed plans, but when I arrived in front of him, most of the time I kept my notes and just talked to him. He didn't have to read my documents, and he would give me answers that were as brief as they were quick.

The brief about Quebecor and the culture was a big one, about 50 pages, a little too long for his taste, and he didn't see himself presenting it. But he knew that parliamentarians wanted this kind of file. So he delegated Jacques Girard to go and officially present it in his place. Girard, who had already been a deputy minister, was familiar with the workings of public administration, and he would be more in his element than Mr. Péladeau. He would be better perceived and better understood.

Afterward, when I prepared a file, I always summarized it in a very concise manner. I adapted to the client. Pierre Péladeau and Quebecor, as I saw week after week, were giants, but sometimes it was enough to act simply to reach them.

On the other hand, I was discovering a need for public relations, which in a way explained how the 1990 crisis had come about. I felt that the press secretary should closely supervise the president in all his public outings, whether they were conferences, interviews, or official meetings. This supervision had not always taken place at Quebecor.



In such a large and important company, which also operates in the publishing and communications field, the boss had to respect a management plan for his public image. Almost all companies, whether medium or large, are equipped with press relations and communication tools with a staff member in place to manage and plan the work. When it comes to the media, contact is first established with the company spokesperson, who is usually the public relations director and who is responsible for filing and processing requests before forwarding them to the president.

Even at the end of 1991, a year later, Mr. Péladeau was still suffering the consequences of the dark episode in *L'Actualité*. I set myself the challenge of rebuilding the image of the President within two years. I first began to draft a plan, informally, that would allow the real Pierre Péladeau to be known. People were judging him for the wrong reasons. His personal life was predominant in the public eye and people always forgot that he was at the helm of an empire that was a major job creator, affecting the lives of over 18,000 people (in 1991). It was on this that we now had to focus and avoid highlighting his character or his bad habits.

I began by establishing a procedure for managing the media. Unlike the political environment, where you have to manage crises on a daily basis, a bit like firefighters who are called in urgently to put out a fire, in the private sector, you can establish a medium- or long-term action plan, anticipate and measure the effects of actions taken and, above all, correct the situation to improve the impact of future actions.

Thus, all the interviews that Mr. Péladeau would give following my recommendations would be targeted. I also began to implement a monitoring and evaluation of our efforts. Prior to my communications plan, when Mr. Péladeau gave a radio, television, or print interview, he was not involved in analyzing the impact or subsequent effects on public opinion. For example, in 1990, many questioned Mr. Péladeau's good faith when he made his reaction known only

several days after the publication of the L'Actualité article. It was not that he became interested in it because of the outcry in the Jewish community and the general public, but simply because he had not read the magazine. It was common practice. Now it was time to change that habit. If Mr. Péladeau met with a journalist, he no longer did it alone. And the next day, I would make sure what the article or show had caused as a reaction. It had to be positive, otherwise, you'd react to turn it around.

It wasn't easy to come up with a clear plan and frame a character like Mr. Péladeau, who tended to decide on his public remarks alone and quickly. If he consulted, he didn't always listen to the recommendations. I understood very quickly that he would not easily adopt the mold I wanted to propose to him. It was the communication plan that had to fit him, not the other way around. I learned how to convince him and, as time went on, to change his practices. I couldn't change the character, I had to frame him.

When I presented my communication plan to him, I had a simple sheet of paper in my hands with the outlines. He read it while I explained my ideas verbally. I explained to him that I felt that the focus of communications should be on the strengths of Quebecor and its founder: history, the role of the employer, and commitment to the company. It was also necessary to publicize the philanthropic side of Quebecor and the considerable sums invested in arts and culture. I explained to him that I needed two years to carry out such a plan and change the popular perception of Quebecor and Pierre Péladeau.

He listened to me very carefully and in the end, he was thrilled. He just said, "That's why I took you with me. "

I was quite proud to have convinced him of my ideas. With him, you never had to be afraid, you had to dare. The worst thing that could happen was that he didn't like the concept and quickly moved on to something else.

In the two years that followed, Pierre Péladeau gave many lectures at special events, conventions, and meetings of various chambers of commerce, following the itinerary he had mapped out. He made himself better known to universities. During this period, he gave nearly one hundred lectures throughout Quebec. Pierre Péladeau and Quebecor had to be sold, appreciated, and recognized for their true value. Mr. Péladeau was spontaneous and had the bad habit of leaving his text according to the impulse or inspiration of the moment. He realized, however, that it was more beneficial to rely on the document prepared for the conference. This was the advice René Lévesque had given him a few years earlier.

The text of his lectures was generally written from a basic outline that we adapted to the particular audience he was going to meet. Generally, the message was simple, direct, and motivating. He liked humor and insisted that I keep coming up with new jokes.

Here are some excerpts from Pierre Péladeau's lectures between October 1991 and November 1997:

[...] What do I think of Quebec sovereignty? I hate to answer that because I am not a politician. I am a businessman and I let those who are paid to do politics gargle about these constitutional issues. For me, unemployment and the economy are much more important.

[...] No profit, no business. No business, no job. IT'S SIMPLE ENOUGH! The proof of what I am saying is a company I know well: Quebecor.

[...] I knew Robert Maxwell well.

You have to live at least a week in the boots of the one you're judging. He wore 12s, I wore 8s.

**[...] You have to know how to surround yourself with the right people and be able to take a calculated risk when the opportunity arises. The only difference between winners and losers is the ability to seize the opportunity when it presents itself. There is no one who doesn't have an opportunity sooner or later.**

**[...] At Quebecor, we are efficient because each of our 100 or so companies operates as if it were still a small business. Each of our companies has to make a profit on its own. Without profit, there is no business.**

**[...] You would be surprised how many philosophical, supposedly experienced managers there are who understand nothing about this elementary principle of profit. When you see companies like the Reichman brothers' Olympia & York in a \$20 billion bankruptcy, you wonder about their notion of profit.**

**[...] An entrepreneur is someone who can dream and have vision, but who also knows how to roll up his sleeves and is not afraid to work; who faces reality.**

**[...] Printing newspapers is quite commonplace. It's a matter of taking the paper in rolls and taking it out in bundles.**

**[..] A few years later, in the 1960s, my printing plant was operating at full capacity and my newspapers were more profitable than ever. Then I was told that the street where I was located was going to be expropriated to make way for the CBC buildings. I had bought the whole street. All my ambitions were crumbling. I didn't holler for long and I moved to another place in a new building that I built in fourth gear. And I started again. In life, nothing lasts forever and you have to be able to adapt to change.**



**[...] If I have one piece of advice to give you to pass on to your children, it's this: it's absolutely necessary to take control of our economy and not close in on yourself. We must not isolate ourselves and believe that the world is standing at our doorstep. The world is vast and it is possible to make it our business playground. It is up to each and every one of us to open our eyes and SEE BIG. It's not because we are Quebecers that it makes a difference.**

**[...] I knew René Lévesque well. He was a very good journalist, probably the best that ever worked for the Journal de Montréal. We often talked together and I told him quite openly: "René, a country is strong as long as its economy is strong. It's not me saying it, it's Plato. Look at African countries, they are politically independent, but they are starving. Why are they starving? Because, economically, they are following everyone. "**

**Today, Quebec is strong politically because it leads the way economically.**

**[...] To be successful in business, one must not be stuck with formulas prepared in advance. We must not be afraid to think outside the box and to have new ideas. You have to know how to change your plan of attack if it doesn't work on the first try and try through another door. Knock on every door until it opens. That's how I reacted when the English in Toronto wouldn't sell me The Toronto Sun. If they don't want my money, I'm going to invest it somewhere else. Others will gladly accept it. And I invested in France.**

**[...] At Quebecor, our success lies in the fact that we evolve with the times and are able to react quickly. Our employees are people who are not afraid of change and we are all artists in our work.**

**[...] One day General Patton goes to the restaurant and orders a lobster. The boy brings him a lobster with one claw missing. The general asks the boy why his lobster has only one claw. “Well, you know, the lobsters are fighting among themselves, and this lobster has one claw missing. ”The general hands his plate to the waiter and says, “Waiter, take this lobster to the kitchen and bring me the winner! ”**

**[...] Always play to win. In life there are those who collapse in the face of difficulties and those who, in fact, don't let themselves be beaten down and go even further. Business is like sport. It's not just talent that counts, but the desire to succeed and to be a winner.**

**[...] There are a number of simple and uncomplicated attitudes that I have learned for my salespeople: 1. You have to be able to smile. Humor opens doors.**

**2. Be positive. Don't lose it when you miss a sale. You miss a deal, you get a deal.**

**3. Know how to listen and don't talk to say nothing. Don't waste time criticizing your competitors or others, especially those who are successful.**

**4. Take care of your customer after the sale. The success of a business often depends on following up and listening to the customer.**

**5. The most important thing: getting paid. A sale is not completed until it is paid for.**

**[...] If given the opportunity, small and medium-sized businesses can often offer better and less expensive solutions to large companies than others.**

**[...] Our society in Quebec has evolved well, and today we are creating businessmen. A few years ago, every son of a notary made a notary, every son of a lawyer made a lawyer, every**

**son of a doctor made a doctor, and every son of a priest made a priest....**

**[...] To make a deal, you have to be imaginative. I recently had proof that intelligence does not necessarily go hand in hand with the job. Where I live in Sainte-Adèle, I have two neighbors. One is a bank manager and the other is my gardener. Last summer, my gardener's son stood at the entrance of his garage with a sign: "Dog for sale: \$10,000".**

**Around 10:00 a.m., the banker goes out to work and he passes in front of the gardener's residence. He stopped his car and shouted to the young boy: "You want to sell your dog? How much are you asking? "**

**The young boy pointed to the poster and said, "\$10,000. "The banker told him that he was a little optimistic and that it would be difficult to get his price. He still wished him good luck!**

**In the evening, around 4:00 p.m. - the bankers finish work early - our bank manager walks past the gardener's residence. He is very surprised to see that the poster of the dog for sale has disappeared. He sees the boy at the back of the courtyard and shouts to him: "Then is your dog sold? - Yes, sir. I sold it as soon as you left this morning. I traded him for two cats at \$5,000 each. "**

**I always wrote speeches, but Pierre Péladeau wrote the final text himself in order to feel comfortable with the delivery. However, he always submitted them to me for approval, to ensure that the message met our public relations objectives. Without a doubt, the objective of changing the popular perception of Pierre Péladeau was achieved and scientific polls clearly demonstrated this. From the pariah that Mr. Péladeau was in 1990, he became the winner of the year in several polls as early as 1993.**

**But it wasn't always easy to manage. Mr. Péladeau was an explosive, fiery character. He didn't do anything by halves. In**

the beginning, he was very independent, because he had always been. I spent my time making sure, not that Mr. Péladeau was adapting to the strategy, but rather that it was based on him. It was at different levels. Before, his flaws continually dominated the public persona. Afterward, it was his good sides that came out. We had to change course and highlight his qualities. That's what I call Public Relations 101. I've been trying to understand how Pierre Péladeau reacted on a daily basis. He had a human side

Unknown to the public and practically disappeared under the weight of all the rumors that had always circulated about him. He had flaws known by just about everyone. Mr. Péladeau had a hot temper. When he got angry, he did not go unnoticed. He could have outbursts of rage where he almost lost control of himself. But with him, it was either black or white. There was no equivocation. I can say, however, that in the majority of those moments, his words really exceeded his thoughts for a reason that I still can't understand. Colleagues have recently explained to me that being a former alcoholic played a big part in this. Being sober doesn't change your temperament.

Mr. Péladeau also had qualities that were to his advantage. He loved people and he loved being in front of the audience. It must be said that some people behaved with him as if they were in front of a real movie star. They wanted to shake his hand and in many cases, they wanted an autograph. He talked to everyone. In public, he was happy. Mr. Péladeau could discuss any subject with anyone, as long as the person was not stuffy or snobby. He would not deprive anyone of advice if asked.

To say that he was handsome seems like a huge lie because he was not good-looking. However, he knew how to charm and he also knew how to seduce. Eventually, his appearance was forgotten. He had the art of pleasing like no other. He loved to laugh and he loved stories and anecdotes. He never forgot any. He was often forgetful when it came to



remembering names, dates or specific details, but he never forgot a good story. All these good things made him a great speaker. He was energetic, valiant, and disciplined.

Also, because of what I had been told about him, especially about his temperament, I expected to work with a rigid person who never let go of his prey. On the contrary, he was a man of vision and knew how to adapt to the situation presented before him. He was quite the opposite of this other rumor that he decided very early on in the battle what he was going to do. Pierre Péladeau was like a journalist. He waited until the last minute before breaking eggs and finalizing his decision. In a way, he avoided getting it wrong too early in the exercise and had to correct his course after the negotiations had progressed. As a true predator, it jumped on the prey just before the attack. This is a journalistic practice that I was taught at the beginning of my career: wait until the deadline to provide as much information as possible in the story.

In truth, the success of the public relations campaign was not really due to my work, but rather to Pierre Péladeau's talent as a natural communicator. The L'Actualité event had been a bump in the road. As he told me at the beginning of my mandate, he had "slackened off". Of all the clients I worked with, he was the one who had the greatest talent as a communicator.

He would never sit on a victory or a good shot. He had a thirst for action and work. No wonder he remained at the helm of his empire until his death. With Pierre Péladeau, you always had to go further and higher. If invitations to give lectures diminished, he would suggest some. I could hardly imagine him retired or inactive. He had often said it: his greatest fear was to find himself paralyzed, unable to move, and dependent on others to live his daily life.

I was always impressed by the wonder he showed when he was on TV stations. I would always accompany him to interviews and shows and he looked like a child in a playroom. He walked the halls next to the CBC studios and

felt at home. He talked to technicians, and other guests on the show, he was interested in everyone. He was very comfortable on the set as if he'd always been on the set.

He also loved the small attentions that were harmless to others. One day, he was the guest of Michel Viens, who hosted the morning show on Radio-Canada television. At the end of the interview, he was given a mug with the show's logo on it. He said to me then:

"That's a nice gift. I'm going to use it for my coffee at home in the morning. "

Another activity that was not common when I started on the 13th floor of Quebecor was the daily press review. I started the exercise after the death of Robert Maxwell, who was found at sea on November 5, 1991. To keep Pierre Péladeau informed of what the print media had reported about Maxwell's disappearance, I sent him the articles published in all the major newspapers. He liked this overview of the news. Since he was a very voracious reader of everything that was generally published, preparing a daily press review saved him time and kept him up to date on news that concerned or interested him.

From then until the end, I arrived at the office at seven o'clock every morning to go through the newspapers and prepare the document.

Some headlines or subjects often caught his attention when they had completely escaped me because the connection with him was not always obvious. He did not hesitate to suggest that I add or remove certain articles in future editions.

One fine morning, in mid-1996, he arrived in my office with an article from the Journal de Montréal that portrayed several Canadian personalities who had received the Legion of Honour. In this group was Denise Bombardier, who had received the title of Knight of the Legion of Honour in 1993.

"What do you think of this: Denise Bombardier who received the Legion of Honour? "

It was not that he felt that she did not deserve it, but rather that this was his indirect way of manifesting his desire to receive it as well. He was a Quebec entrepreneur who had saved the Didier printing works from bankruptcy and provided work for thousands of French people. The Legion of Honor would have meant for him that his success had spread beyond the borders and that he found himself in the same clan as Paul Desmarais. Such an honor would have proved to Pierre Péladeau that he too was a citizen of the world.

I contacted Loïc Hennekinne, the French Ambassador to Ottawa at the time, and asked for information on how to obtain the Legion of Honour. I began the process of writing the dossier and his son Pierre-Karl, who was stationed in Paris, completed it. On April 10, 1997, the President of the French Republic appointed Pierre Péladeau Officer of the Legion of Honour. The official press release of the embassy explains :

“This high distinction is awarded to Mr. Péladeau in recognition of his active participation in the French economy and the development of French-Canadian relations. This honor also underlines Mr. Péladeau’s role as a patron of the arts who has promoted lyric art and supported French artists.”

When he received the press release, he rushed to my office to show me the text and thanked me for my work, because he knew I had started the process. He refused to receive the honor in Ottawa, preferring to wait and travel to Paris to get it directly from the hands of the President of the Republic. A date had been tentatively set for early 1998. Unfortunately, Pierre Péladeau died before then. The Legion of Honour was presented posthumously to his family.

Mr. Péladeau received many honors in Quebec, Canada, and even in the United States. But he confided to me, shortly before his death, that the honor that touched him the most was that of the Legion of Honor.

**He saw in this title the proof of an international recognition that made him somewhat forget the local and sometimes cruel struggles led by his fellow men in Quebec. France came to confirm to him that, deep down, he was not really a pariah, and that if he was described as such, it was because he was not well known.**

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**Bernard Bujold and his two children David-Bernard and Stéphanie  
at Le Journal de Montréal - 1992**





**Bernard Bujold and his two children at his Quebecor office - 1992**









The 13th floor of Quebecor's head office at 612 rue Saint-Jacques - 1997

# L'actualité

1001, boul. de Maisonneuve ouest, Montréal (Québec) H3A 3E1 (514) 845-5141

Le 11 mai 1990

Monsieur Bernard Bujold  
C.P. 5253, Succ. B  
Montréal (Québec)  
H3B 4B5

Cher monsieur,

Pour des raisons qui sont désormais de notoriété publique, la plupart des lettres reçues par L'actualité suite à l'article sur monsieur Pierre Péladeau ont perdu de leur nécessité. Nous avons dû reconnaître, en effet, que les citations qui les avaient suscitées n'étaient pas exactes. Nos lecteurs ont été induits en erreur, et L'actualité s'est déjà publiquement excusé auprès d'eux, mais nous tenions cependant à accuser réception de votre lettre.

Notre intention n'était nullement hostile au sujet de l'article; mais la profondeur de la réaction à plusieurs de ses propos était difficile à prévoir.

Avec l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.



Jean Paré  
Rédacteur en chef

JP/sm





Front cover L'actualité - April 1990

## Chapter 5

### Taming the Beast

One should not expect a character of Pierre Péladeau's caliber to be simple. He was a predator. He had the defect of his qualities. He was passionate, but that passion could "burn" those around him.

To work with a phenomenon of this size, one must first define it and get to know it. Mr. Péladeau himself did this when he wanted to close a deal. He would leave aside the financial aspect to first have a human evaluation of the people involved in a given situation. I had to do the same thing with Pierre Péladeau. Evaluate the character.

He lived up to what you would expect from a man like him. A person of superior energy, with a very strong instinct, as if he had a magical power with a kind of gift of clairvoyance to complement it. He senses people and situations like a beast senses danger and smells food.

Even though he seemed rough at first glance, he was very structured. In fact, he used to say:

"If you can't do your work at the office between 9 and 5, you're not well organized. "

This was the first comment he made to me on the issue of work schedules when I started serving him. When he saw Pierre-Karl working until 11 p.m., he kept repeating to him:

"Pierre-Karl is a bad organization. You're going to exhaust yourself. You have to be able to work in an organized way and be able to delegate. "

He understood that there is no point in running out of breath to succeed. You just have to be organized.



**My work schedule was fairly structured. In the morning, I would first present him with his press review and throughout the day, I would send him notes on current issues and topics. Since my philosophy in public relations was to keep the character the same, I would frame him. The problem with Pierre Péladeau was that it was black or white. It was difficult to convince him to change his initial opinion, but it was possible to do so if he was given concrete proof of the argument.**

**Mr. Péladeau was a hypersensitive person. He disapproved of people who were poorly dressed, unclean, or looked neglected; this bothered him. He liked discipline and class. You had to know that and avoid showing up at the office in jeans and a T-shirt. He preferred elegance. His office was the perfect representation of this: there were always flowers, music, and beautiful paintings.**

**As much as he could sometimes clown around and be naughty, he hated vulgarity in others. He loved women. Yet he would never have been seen in an establishment of nude dancers. During a show at Place des Arts where the female artist was dressed provocatively, he had left the room at intermission and told me he found the presentation in bad taste.**

**A woman who presented herself at the office with a too-short skirt certainly attracted his attention, but because he hated her attire. Same thing with the men. For him, the way of being dressed and the care that one brought to his appearance reflected the soul of the person. If he saw someone who looked “dilapidated,” it was synonymous with inner decay. His mother probably instilled these values and discipline in him. It was a scholarly man who was always looking for excellence.**

**Pierre Péladeau was truly a beast in the figurative sense, and he often inspired fear. I approached the man in an almost naive way. I respected Pierre Péladeau, but unlike many others, I never felt fear in front of him. I had a lot of**

admiration and loyalty for him, but there is a fundamental difference between being afraid of someone and respecting them.

If he asked me anything, I always had to meet the expectations I could create for him. If I made a promise about work, I had to make sure that I would “deliver the goods” on time and according to his expectations. I always made every effort to never disappoint him on this point. I never raised false hopes for him.

Although I was intimate with him, I kept my distance. A bit like riding a horse, I kept a perimeter, a space between the beast and me. This is the secret of success in a job that requires being in daily contact with such an important person. Keeping your distance.

My private life remained private. Often we would talk about personal matters, but we always respected each other’s privacy.

I would see him, and he would call me Mr. Bernard.

Mr. Péladeau needed his territory. He didn’t like to be alone, but there were times when he needed his “bubble”. I understood that the character was reacting in contradiction to himself. Often, people are upset by all kinds of problems. If one morning he came in a bad mood, it was better to ignore it and not try to impose himself on him. I would let him get back into a good mood himself. I wasn’t trying to live for him. I was accessible and available, but I never tried to control him.

I never considered Mr. Péladeau’s mood swings as a personal attack. He was often embittered or sensitive at times. I’ve seen him criticize the work of some employees, and I’ve seen him criticize someone who had just been struck by his temper tantrum and cry, “He doesn’t like me. ”

Mr. Péladeau’s criticisms generally had nothing to do with the person himself. The key to success in coaxing such a beast lies in stoicism: “Take nothing personal,” as the popular Anglicism says. One must react coldly and factually.

**Mr. Péladeau was demanding and sometimes unrestrainedly critical. His words very often exceeded his thoughts. There was no filter. He never wore white gloves to say what he had in mind. So to survive that kind of behavior as a deputy, you have to build up your armor.**

**He was very attentive to the employees. If he saw someone who didn't seem to be on his plate, and as long as it wasn't working, he would take the time to find out and try to help the person. But if the work was involved, it was ruthless and sometimes rough.**

**If someone had health problems, Mr. Péladeau would pay great attention to them. On the other hand, if someone complained about the state of their life or was defeatist, he did not appreciate it and offered no support. If one showed courage, he helped, but one had to help oneself. There was nothing free with him. A loser mentality exasperated him to the utmost.**

**I sometimes turned my heels a few times when I arrived at the door of his office and saw his obvious bad mood. I would turn around and wait for the storm to dissipate. If I saw him moody a**

**In the morning, I changed sides in the corridor. You have to know how to deal with the emotions of a character like that.**

**Pierre Péladeau was close to his feelings, that's why he could feel others with a rare acuity.**

**He was not mean. At the end of a day that had gotten off to a bad start, he could come to me and offer me tickets to a concert or an event, but he didn't often apologize.**

**One of Pierre Péladeau's peculiarities was that he never felt sorry for himself, for his discomforts, his problems, his fate. Complaining was not an option in his lifestyle. In the months leading up to the accident of December 2, 1997, Pierre Péladeau never mentioned that he was feeling unwell. The last thing he wanted was for us to show him pity.**

**His sixth sense did not often deceive him. In 1994, when Pierre Bourque ran against Jean Doré for mayor of Montreal,**

few people had bet on him. From the outset, Mr. Péladeau had been convinced that Mr. Bourque would be elected with a strong majority. He knew him a little. He thought he was a simple man with good ideas. From the outset, he met the basic criteria that Mr. Péladeau liked.

Pierre Péladeau was one of the few important businessmen to support Pierre Bourque. He had asked me to find a press attaché for his candidate. The major public relations agencies were already involved with other candidates or simply did not want to associate themselves with the candidate who was being seen in advance. Pierre Bourque finally won the November 6, 1994 elections, taking 39 of the 51 council seats. It was a completely unexpected sweep, except by Mr. Péladeau. Mr. Bourque had won without a press secretary, however...

The new mayor invited Mr. Péladeau to sit on the Committee of Elders, set up in 1995, but Mr. Péladeau declined the invitation. In his opinion, this kind of grouping would be ineffective. I was delegated to attend the meetings in his place. Once again, Mr. Péladeau had a particular flair for this type of meeting, because a few months later, the committee was disbanded. Mayor Bourque had been criticized for the creation of the committee; it was said that there was a conflict of interest between the business community and City Hall.

Mr. Péladeau hated defeat. This was also true in his spare time.

During the Canadian Men's Tennis International held in Montreal on July 30, 1995, we were invited to a V.I.P. box overlooking the center court, close to the players. I accompanied him with Carole Gagné of the National Bank. He had also invited one of his friends for the occasion. The sun was shining brightly. The match opposed André Agassi and Pete Sampras.

Mr. Péladeau loved tennis. He had once been a good player. He said that he had been a top-ranked player in provincial



championships in the past. I believed him, but I never saw the trophy...

Mr. Agassi introduced himself in his colorful Bermuda shorts, black stockings, shoulder-length hair, and colorful sweater. He was completely faithful to the image of bum that had made him as much a household name as his victories. Mr. Péladeau's reaction was not long in coming. He began to speak out against André Agassi:

"Did you see if he is badly combed, badly dressed? He is not even shaved. If it makes sense to show up at a tournament that's down like that. Besides, he plays like a foot. He'll never win. Don't try to convince me otherwise. If I say it, I know it. Tennis, I know it! "

It must be said that the friend who was escorting her that day had naively mentioned that she had a weakness for Mr. Agassi. Women in general found him handsome and attractive. She made a remark to that effect that only added fuel to the fire.

Mr. Péladeau praised Pete Sampras, and said that, unlike his rival, he was "very good-looking". He was a winner. Mr. Péladeau had decided that: Sampras would win hands down and in two sets. Unfortunately, not only was the bum in great shape during this match, but after the first set, he was clearly ahead. Mr. Péladeau was getting more and more upset. I tried to calm him down a bit, take his mind off it so he could enjoy the tournament, and forget that Agassi had long hair.

Péladeau was starting to get in a bad mood and he was trying to explain his foal's performance.

"It's because he's not in shape today. It's very hot too. He's probably sick. He only throws balloons," he repeated.

Brooke Shields, then the fiancée of André Agassi, was in the stands, a few rows away from our dressing room.

"Did you see, Mr. Péladeau, that the beautiful Brooke Shields is here? We could take a picture later, after the game. It would be published in Le Journal de Montréal. "

He, who always had an eye for a beautiful woman, didn't even turn his head.

"No, no! Let it be," he decided without appeal.

At the beginning of the second set, Pete Sampras was practically beaten. The more the match progressed, the more obvious it became.

At the next break, Mr. Péladeau stood up and said to his friend :

"We're leaving! "

Carole Gagné and I walked them back to her car. We couldn't take the picture with Brooke Shields...

It is common knowledge that while Le Journal de Montréal allocates an important place to artists, the sports section is another pillar. The arrival of Jacques Beauchamp, for example, was one of the key elements in the newspaper's rise to prominence; his contribution brought in a large number of readers, building loyalty among its important clientele for years to come. While Mr. Péladeau understood that sports were important to his day, he was not a sports fan, with the exception of tennis.

At a Formula 1 Grand Prix organized in Montreal on June 11, 1995, by Normand Legault, I had obtained only a few good tickets, very rare, for the weekend of the race. I decided to invite Mr. Péladeau to accompany me, but he had no interest in racing. I tried to describe to him the event, the atmosphere, the energy, how special it was to be there. Despite all my arguments, he preferred to leave his place to others who would appreciate it. He didn't understand either that I was interested in such an activity.

He also hated field hockey and very rarely attended a game, which did not prevent him from admiring Maurice Richard. He would sometimes go to the Forum, but only to accompany clients rather than to watch the field hockey game. I will never forget the inauguration of the Molson Centre (now the Bell Centre) on March 16, 1996, when we were invited to a corporate box. Paul Martin was among the personalities

present, as was André Bérard, along with other guests of similar caliber. Everyone was captivated by the field hockey game. Mr. Péladeau arrived late towards the end of the first period. As he entered the dressing room, he didn't even glance out towards the rink or the bleachers where the Mar-Queen's guests had taken their seats. He rushed to the buffet to admire the dishes and congratulate the hostess on the presentation.

At the end of the game, he was presented with a beautiful book on the Old Forum and the New Hockey Temple. He barely flipped through it. He just said, "Ah, that's nice!" and, in front of the person who had just given it to him, he turned to a Quebecor assistant present for the evening, saying :

"Here, you'll give it to your son! "

Pierre Péladeau claimed to be fearless. I don't know if he was telling the truth or bluffing, but I must admit that he very rarely admitted that he was afraid in a given situation. He often mentioned his stay in Philadelphia during the time of the Philadelphia Journal. The newspaper's offices were located in one of the city's notoriously dangerous neighborhoods. He was not recommended to tourists. Even people from the surrounding areas never came to visit.

Mr. Péladeau had to walk across it to get to the newspaper and he regularly came across "ice cabinets. He was never attacked. He said that if you look a potential attacker straight in the eye and challenge him, he will never dare to touch you; that you should never show any sign of weakness, even if you are outnumbered or undersized.

Pierre-Karl had to put this principle into practice in spite of himself. Mr. Péladeau recounted that, after an evening in the company of classmates, Pierre-Karl came home with a black eye. A fight broke out and a group decided to attack him. Not only was he banged up, but he was afraid he would be beaten up again by the gang members. Mr. Péladeau would have responded:

**“You’re going to go back, you’re going to pick the biggest guy in the gang and you’re going to beat him up. Otherwise, they will never respect you, and they will continue to attack you. If you follow this advice, they’ll look up to you and the rest of the group will run away in fear! ”**

**The story does not say how the rest of the story unfolded. \*\*\***

**Mr. Péladeau loved guns. He owned a few of them. He had been on three safaris and had hunted many times. But, with age, he had given up this kind of activity.**

**For his personal safety, he always kept a firearm handy in his bedroom. At the office, we had discussed what extra steps could be taken to protect him in any eventuality. Society was changing and criminals were becoming more daring and voracious. I had talked to him about the risks of kidnapping, for example, for someone like him. There was an alarm in his house, but was it enough? Since he always kept his revolver, an old Lugger 45, close at hand, he said there was nothing to be done.**

**His entourage thought about it more than he did. He didn’t see who could attack him.**

**One day, in the fall of 1996, he noticed that the Lugger had disappeared. He looked for it in all parts of his house. We never knew what happened to it. He received guests continuously, and his house was practically an inn where guests were constantly coming and going. It would have been difficult to find the culprit.**

**So he decided to buy another gun. For advice and guidance, he contacted his friend, Chief of Police Jacques Duchesneau, while he was on duty at the MUCPC. They spoke to each other very often. In fact, later, the two men discussed the possibility of a job at Quebecor for the police officer, but nothing ever materialized. I had the opportunity to be Chief Duchesneau’s guest on Mount Royal a few times to ride the horses of the cavalry. Raynald Corbeil was the police officer who accompanied us on these Saturday morning rides: a unique and very enjoyable experience.**



After a few weeks of conversations and exchanges on the choice of the weapon he wanted, we went to the police shooting center with Mr. Duchesneau to make sure that everything was in conformity and that everything was working.

Mr. Duchesneau was a true marksman. In any case, he impressed us. He could shoot with any caliber. Lawyer Claire Brassard, who was negotiating for a job at Quebecor, had been invited by Pierre Péladeau to accompany us to the shooting session. When Mr. Péladeau pulled out his pistol, a 380 caliber Backup DA model, the Chief of Police found it to be fairly harmless. The object was small enough to fit in a jacket pocket.

“Your revolver will hurt, but within ten feet,” Duchesneau explained. Further than that, the bandit won’t feel much. ”

In addition, Mr. Péladeau was increasingly frail towards the end of his life and had difficulty arming the revolver. Even in position, I’m not sure that he was able to hold it firmly enough to have time to aim and fire accurately.

Mr. Duchesneau advised him:

“If you catch a thief in your home, try to talk to him first before shooting! In October 1995, Pierre Péladeau was invited to speak at a conference at Lake Megantic. As he had promised to be there, it would have taken an earthquake to prevent him from going. And again! Even though he had almost always traveled by helicopter since he had acquired such a vehicle, the storm that hit the province that day could not dissuade him from doing so. He didn’t want to break his promise. The pilot at the time, François Desgagnés, had spoken to the pilot of Quebecor’s jet at Dorval Airport and was strongly advised against flying in this weather. Several private planes that were on the airport grounds had not been allowed to take off.

But Mr. Péladeau had decided that we would go to Lake Megantic. He convinced Desgagnés to take off and take us there. It must be said that this pilot was not shy if we are to

**believe the adventures he was recounting about his acrobatics.**

**Quebecor's first helicopter was a bush model, a BELL IV model 206-B. It had been acquired in July 1992 from Donohue. The management staff used it to go and check on the evolution of the**

**wood. It was not an all-comfort model. It had been modified to carry passengers, but originally it had been built for a completely different purpose. It was like a flying tractor converted into a limousine. There were even times when a door opened in mid-air. You really had to make sure you had your seatbelt fastened at all times.**

**On the night of the storm, the robustness of the device was demonstrated. I was on the trip with Mr. Péladeau and two assistants from Quebecor, Weekly Division. It was memorable. We couldn't see anything. At one point, Mr. Desgagné even had to land to revise his flight plan and fly around the busiest areas. At no time during the trip did Mr. Péladeau show any fear or panic. The other members of the group were literally frozen in their seats. I've never been tossed around like this in mid-air before in my life. There was no respite. To reassure us, Mr. Péladeau kept talking, telling us funny stories that didn't make us laugh. He had exhausted his repertoire, and we were always tense, clinging to our benches like a lifeline.**

**I have no words to describe our relief when we finally landed in Megantic. I think the pilot was happy too.**

**Mr. Péladeau went to deliver his lecture happy to have kept his commitment. We spent the night there. There was no question of reliving the experience of the storm another time. The next day, the sun was shining brightly. No wind, no clouds. The return was angelically calm and Mr. Péladeau did not utter a single word the entire trip.**

**The flying tractor was really becoming too uncomfortable, too noisy, and too old. When, in December 1994, Denis Lacroix of Bell Helicopter Textron contacted Mr. Péladeau to present**

him with a brand new model, a Longranger IV 206-L4, he was tempted. This time he had a flying limousine. No gimmick is possible with the Donohue aircraft. There was no danger that the doors would open in full flight. The interior was even set up so that one could work in it. The mechanics were a product of the latest aeronautical technology, with more powerful and, above all, quieter engines. The trips were made in less time and were more pleasant. I also participated in the negotiation of the purchase of this aircraft. The deal almost fell through because Mr. Péladeau refused to pay an additional \$10,000 for a night of flying instruction. This amount was not significant, however, because the helicopter was worth more than a million dollars.

Mr. Péladeau said it was really the only luxury he could afford, the only eccentricity. He loved to travel by helicopter. It was his hobby, which made him almost euphoric. Each time, he was amazed like a child at being able to fly over the province in this way. He always looked carefully at the route and he wanted to know which village, town, road, river, or park we could see below us.

He also wanted to share this passion with those around him. Every time he received people in his home, the guests were treated to a hike above his residence in the Laurentians, to enjoy his new toy. He regularly offered the helicopter to his friends when he was away for special events or meetings.

On January 29, 1996, he was invited to the swearing-in of Lucien Bouchard as Premier. He decided to travel to Quebec City by his usual means of transportation. Knowing that Mayor Pierre Bourque had to go there as well, he phoned him to suggest that he take advantage of the flight with him.

Pierre Bourque almost let himself be convinced, but finally, he insisted on going by his own means. He

Mr. Péladeau already had a limousine and a driver provided for this purpose, and he also had documents he wanted to see in the quiet of Highway 20. Mr. Péladeau repeated that he

had to come with him. “The limousine is out of fashion, it’s tiring, it’s too long. “But Mr. Bourque stuck to his plan.

Everyone was on time in Quebec City and the swearing-in took place as well as the reception. In the meantime, the temperature suddenly changed and it started to snow. The pilot of the helicopter came to advise us that he had not obtained the authorization to take off because of the bad weather conditions. Mr. Péladeau became angry. Especially since he had made an appointment at 8 p.m. that evening with a friend whom he had promised to accompany him to a concert at the Centre Pierre-Péladeau. Since it was a promise, I knew it was impossible to try to convince him to stay in Quebec City for the night.

I suggested that he ask the other guests from Montreal if there was not one who was driving back to the city. I suggested Pierre Bourque.

He thought for a moment and, a little embarrassed, said to me: “Go ask him. ”

Mr. Bourque immediately accepted with a big satisfied smile. He also took the opportunity to taunt him all the way home with remarks such as: “How do you like my limousine, Mr. Péladeau? ”

We arrived at the concert on time, but just barely. Mr. Bourque pushed the joke as far as getting out of the vehicle first, in front of the Centre, to open the door and help him out. The poor helicopter pilot had to wait until the next day to get the green light and drive his vehicle back to Montreal.

Several pilots took turns serving him. Being Pierre Péladeau’s pilot wasn’t always easy. He expected them to also be car drivers and to be able to do a few races as well. But there were some who were willing to take on both roles. Drivers often have a fairly high opinion of themselves. It is unthinkable for them to be a “driver” on the road, no matter who they are for. But Mr. Péladeau, who knew how to seduce and charm when he wanted a service, had managed to win over those who remained in his service.



**Mr. Péladeau liked to compare himself to his business counterparts and he cited several of them as examples during his conferences. The list included mostly, if not exclusively, nationalists like him. However, he led people primarily because he saw a resemblance between them and himself. Pierre Péladeau was not, however, one contradiction away from this. He could change his mind about someone for sometimes very trivial reasons.**

**For example, he had long criticized Laurent Beaudoin for being a federalist. He had no admiration for him, and he did not hesitate to say so.**

**One day, he came up with the idea of having his own private jet. Other companies had them, so why not Quebecor? The model he was interested in was made by Bombardier. As a good nationalist who had always insisted that “in Quebec, you have to buy Quebec”, choosing Bombardier was practically self-evident, despite Laurent Beaudoin.**

**Before acquiring such a device, however, it is necessary to ensure that it has all the desired qualities and that its performance is up to expectations and needs. Test flights are therefore scheduled according to a precise schedule and itinerary for the same aircraft that is shown to different people. Mr. Péladeau’s coveted jet flew to Florida, then to Georgia, Texas, and Mexico before returning to its point of departure.**

**There would be a one-week delay between the departure flight and the return, but Péladeau saw this as an opportunity to spend a week in Florida. In the meantime, a problem forced him to urgently return to Montreal. He had no alternative but to find a regular flight. Someone called Laurent Beaudoin to inform him of this change.**

**Spontaneously Beaudoin told him that it was useless to go to all that trouble.**

**“I’m sending my personal jet to bring you back. ”**

**Mr. Péladeau was deeply touched by such a generous gesture. He accepted the service, but the effects of this**

gesture exceeded what Mr. Beaudoin could have expected in return. In fact, from then on until his death, Mr. Péladeau praised the Bombardier builder in his lectures and at every opportunity. This anecdote reflects Mr. Péladeau's paradoxes. As much as he had been irritated by Mr. Beaudoin's political convictions, the spontaneous gesture he had made to help him out had seduced him. They later worked together to create the Chair of Entrepreneurship. As for their ideological differences, they simply avoided talking about politics.

In his speeches, Pierre Péladeau also mentioned Jean Coutu, Quebec's most famous pharmacist. Mr. Péladeau used the example of Jean Coutu's early days to show his audience that it is possible to succeed in business "even if you start with a slap and a boot. For Mr. Péladeau, it was important to model people like Coutu so that young people could be inspired by them and push them to work tirelessly to succeed. André Chagnon and André Bérard were also among his favorites.

Of Mr. Chagnon, he said he was an important builder. Chagnon had succeeded in becoming the largest cable distributor in all of Quebec, and he had also managed to gain market share and know-how abroad. "And, initially, he was an electrician, but he had dreams and ideas. "Neither Mr. Chagnon nor Mr. Péladeau ever thought that one would eventually acquire the other.

It is impossible to forget André Bérard in the list of his favorites. Mr. Péladeau often said that they were both brothers in temperament because they acted, thought, and lived the same way. They did not have the same stature at all, but Mr. Péladeau liked to say that they were made in the same mold.

Another businessman Mr. Péladeau admired was Jean-Marc Brunet. He considered him a spiritual son and he never missed an opportunity to praise his merits. Brunet is the founder of the JMB Le Naturiste chain, a network of more than 165 health and natural product centers founded in 1968.

If he was faithful in friendship, Mr. Péladeau expected reciprocity. If one of his friends also happened to be an employee and accepted an offer of employment elsewhere, Mr. Péladeau was literally torn apart as if he had been betrayed. He couldn't get over the loss because for him it was a real separation.

Gérard Cellier, now deceased, had worked for several years at Quebecor and was one of his close friends.

by Pierre Péladeau. One day, he came to tell him that he had accepted the offer of the Quebec Delegation in New York. It was the kind of offer that could not be refused, and Cellier had hesitated for a long time, knowing the pain he would cause his friend, but he had opted for this new challenge.

Mr. Péladeau often spoke of the injury he suffered as a result of his departure.

"He betrayed me!" he said.

A few years later, Gérard Cellier returned to Quebec. He was out of work for some time until the situation became untenable. Mr. Péladeau then called him and offered to return to Quebecor. He quickly found a position in the distribution division. But the chemistry didn't work out. Cellier was not comfortable or could not live up to expectations. He left Quebecor once again to retire modestly to the South, where he owned a sailboat. Unfortunately, he was suffering from an incurable illness which he succumbed to some time later. Mr. Péladeau arranged to have the remains repatriated at his own expense in his private jet. I was touched by this gesture because it showed his great human generosity.

His closest, most intimate, and most precious friend was undoubtedly Tony Calandrini. Of Italian origin, he had emigrated to Quebec in the hope of starting a business and making a better living than in his native country. Quebec was a promised land for these immigrants who had lost almost everything during the Second World War.

Calandrini was interested in newspapers and he created a distribution company that later became associated with the

**Messageries Dynamiques network. Mr. Péladeau had blind faith in him. He always listened religiously to his advice. His opinions, his point of view, his impressions and his intuition were precious to him. When Tony Calandrini came to a meeting on behalf of Pierre Péladeau, he was listened to as if the big boss was there.**

**Two weeks after I had started my job as assistant to the president of Quebecor, Mr. Péladeau invited me to spend an evening at his residence in Sainte-Adèle. He introduced me to Tony Calandrini his former driver.**

**Immediately after supper, Mr. Péladeau got up and said he was going to retire to his room to relax, that he was late with his reading.**

**“Stay here and watch field hockey. ”**

**He went to his room leaving his door ajar. I watched field hockey with Mr. Calandrini who, throughout the game, asked me questions about everything and nothing, about personal and less personal matters; he told me about Mr. Péladeau, my feelings towards him, and my perception of Quebecor. It was like a father interviewing a suitor for his daughter. I finally realized that he was gauging me to see if I was really up to the task and if I possessed the essential qualities to be accepted by Quebecor and the Péladeau family.**

**At the end of the third period of field hockey, Tony stood up and opened his arms, and said, “Mr. Bernard, welcome to the family. ”**

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**Pierre Péladeau - speaker**





**Pierre-Karl, Péladeau, Pierre Péladeau and Bernard Bujold -  
Christmas 1992**

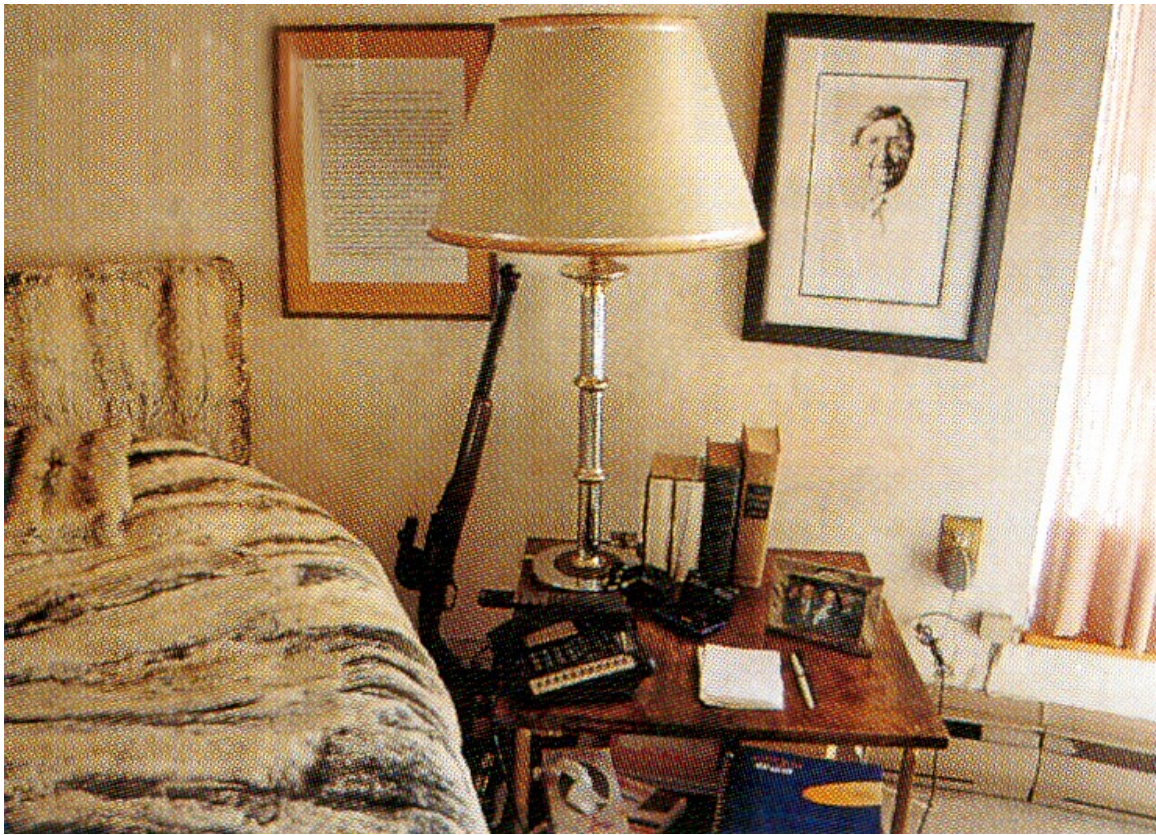






**Bernard Bujold et Pierre Péladeau - Christmas 1994**





**Bedroom of Pierre Péladeau in Ste-Adèle - 1997**





**Bernard Bujold and Pierre Péladeau - 1997**





**Bernard Bujold 's office at Quebecor - 1997**









Pierre Péladeau - 1995

## Chapter 6

### How to integrate into the family?

Joining a large company and working alongside the president is initially a difficult challenge. Imagine the task when the company is a family business when the children are actively working in it, when everyone has their own ego and character, and when the children come from three different mothers.

Shortly before his death, Pierre Péladeau gave an interview to journalist Pierre Maisonneuve in August 1997. Towards the end of the interview, in which “Mr. P.” gave himself up in the straightforward style he was then known for, Mr. Maisonneuve asked him what he wished for his children in a society like ours.

“I wish them what they will want to do with their lives. They will have the tools to achieve it, if they want to. But if they settle down to navel-gazing and spending their money here and there on whims, that’s their choice, and they’ll face the consequences.”

Long before his death, many business leaders were already worried about Pierre Péladeau’s estate. Quebec and other provinces had already witnessed the erosion of many family fortunes and businesses, such as the Steinbergs and Eaton’s, to name a few. Once the ancestor is gone, it can be difficult for children to carry on the success of their parents.

From the moment I arrived in Quebecor, I never wanted to take a place that wasn’t mine, and I always tried not to interfere in the family business. But since it was a family business, I also had to sometimes consider the presence of children in the management of Pierre Péladeau’s image. I

always had a very good relationship with the children, who were very respectful of all employees. However, their father sometimes used the employees to pass messages to his children, and that's when things got complicated.

Pierre Péladeau's family consists of seven children from three different unions. Erik is the oldest of the family; he was born on March 24, 1955. Isabelle was born on September 12, 1958, Pierre-Karl on October 16, 1961, and Anne-Marie on April 29, 1965. These four children are from the first marriage with Raymonde Chopin. Esther was born on June 13, 1977, and Simon-Pierre on December 24, 1978 (the same date as her father's death). These two children are from the second marriage, with Line Parisien. Finally, Jean was born on January 22, 1991, a few months before I started working at Quebecor. His mother is Manon Blanchette.

From the beginning of 1991, I established a very friendly relationship with Érik, and we even attended a few events together, including a rock concert by Brian Adam at the Old Port of Montreal. The concert was organized by my friend Nick Carbone, a well-known producer.

Isabelle was not very often present at the offices on Saint-Jacques Street when I started at Quebecor, but she later took care of the Publicor magazine section on Bates Street.

Pierre-Karl was 30 years old when I joined the company. We weren't particularly close, but we had a common interest that we discussed in front of the coffee machine: The Wall Street Journal.

I got along very well with the three seniors at Quebecor, but I only had daily contact with Erik.

Pierre Péladeau's older children had to deal with a father who was not very present for them. He admitted this himself in interviews a few times towards the end of his life. He did, however, play all sorts of games with his father.

his last born, nicknamed "Little John". He even went so far as to sit on the floor, something he had never done with the older ones. It must be said that at the time of his first



marriage, he was continually immersed in work, and he suffered from alcoholism.

Much to her father's disappointment, Isabelle did not show much interest in Quebecor. He was proud of his daughter, and he would have liked a woman to take an important place in the management of the company. She was not interested in classical music either. Érik and Pierre-Karl were the only two children present and active at Quebecor's offices at 612 Saint-Jacques Street West.

Like his father, Érik made it his duty to greet employees every day and to learn about their work, their health, and their families. He tried to motivate them and listen to them. Pierre-Karl was more withdrawn, and more reserved with the employees.

Erik didn't have his father's rebellious side, he was more composed. Pierre-Karl had the energy and ambition that his father must have had. It seemed as if Pierre Péladeau found himself in his two eldest sons, but in a different way, as if each had inherited one half of the "patriarch".

I noticed very early on in Pierre-Karl the vivacity of his intelligence, his energy, and the charisma inherited from his father. When he would enter a room, he would impose. He possessed a remarkable magnetism. Erik was less impressive, but on the other hand, he was more generous and cordial.

My first years with the children were rather calm and pleasant. There was never any confrontation or discord between them and me. But as the company grew and Pierre Péladeau got older, the heirs became more experienced in business and more confident. Pierre-Karl became more and more self-assured. Gradually, he confronted his father about the management techniques he had learned in university and which he wanted to apply to Quebecor. It was the new mentality that was the opposite of the old one.

I started to find myself in conflict situations very often. I had promised Pierre Péladeau that I would be loyal and I

considered him to be my mentor within the company. I didn't feel comfortable in this power struggle and I tried to manage the situation in the best possible way.

When I designed the communication plan, the kids weren't really part of it. Of course, I had to be aware that they would be running the company very soon, but Pierre-Karl wanted to be less exposed, less mediatized than his father. Erik readily lent himself to public relations exercises, but the Quebecor empire remained the work of Pierre Péladeau, its founder.

Érik Péladeau had a project of his own that he wanted to implement in his father's company: Quebecor Multimedia. While Pierre Péladeau was happy to use paper in his communications, Érik was more modern; he was interested in new technologies and followed their evolution very closely. In 1993, new media, with the Internet in mind, were in their infancy. If the Internet was a discovery for the majority of users when it was made accessible to everyone, it was already a common tool for researchers and academics. Once democratized, the network and its inherent products grew at a spectacular rate of up to 300% per year. It was a must-have for visionaries. But private companies were slow to follow suit. Many had only just become accustomed to communicating by fax. The Internet was far from being of interest to them, at least at that time.

Long before others at Quebecor, Erik had anticipated the potential, not only of the network but also of what it could bring about in terms of development. Already, giants in the telecommunications industry

Invested huge sums of money to develop this new toy, which is simple to use but complex to integrate.

While the Internet seemed like a good deal for Érik Péladeau, his father was not convinced. In an interview for the magazine *Le 30 1*, he expressed it in a few words:

“Internet, Internet. Everyone talks to me about the Internet, but no one can explain to me exactly what it does. ”

Pierre Péladeau wasn't very keen on gadgets either, unlike Erik, who was on the lookout for all the latest electronic gadgets. Wanting to surprise his father, Erik had equipped the Sainte-Adèle house with a state-of-the-art stereo system, with remote control, multiple programming, etc. He was also very interested in the latest electronic gadgets. After several attempts, Mr. Péladeau could barely locate the switch. Finally, he continued to use the old stereo system with which he was familiar.

Erik had developed a plan to create a multimedia division at Quebecor. As with many other companies, the multimedia product was practical but expensive to implement. In addition, there was still no way to make it profitable. Mr. Péladeau knew how to make a profit with a magazine, newspaper, or printing company, but he didn't see Quebecor making a profit with this new medium. He wasn't very keen on the idea of investing in venture capital.

According to Mr. Péladeau, a company had to stick to the areas it knew best; he gave the example that Quebecor would not go into selling cars because the company knew nothing about it. One might ask the question: If the big boss had been alive and in office, would he have favored the acquisition of Videotron? He had bought Télévision Quatre-Saisons, but for him, a television station was an electronic newspaper.

Pierre Péladeau told Erik that he preferred to wait a little, observe the movements of the multimedia market still in development, and then better calculate his investment in this field, even if the costs were to prove higher. Erik knew that the development price would be lower if one invested immediately, but his father remained cautious.

Quebecor finally made the decision to invest and eventually created the subsidiary Quebecor Multimedia in October 1994. Erik often came to see me to help him convince his father to take an interest in high technology. Whether it was for the annual report or press communications, Erik wanted to make me aware of the use of new media to make Quebecor a



leading player in this field. It wasn't easy for me, because on the one hand, my boss was advocating the old economy, while on the other hand, Erik wanted Quebecor to turn to the new.

For a long time, the only terminal connected to the Internet in the building at 612 Saint-Jacques Street West was in Erik's office. Things have changed a lot since then.

It's never easy to convince the president of a large company to adopt new practices, whether he's your father or not. Take cell phones, for example. There was a time, not so long ago when some company executives prohibited its use by employees. Today, even support staff have one.

Quebecor, like every other company, faced the challenges of opening up to new media, but in a way, Erik was a visionary.

Mr. Péladeau was finally convinced. During the last year of his life, he began to use the Internet. He even took private lessons to learn how to navigate. On the day of his death, a training course was on his agenda.

Isabelle Péladeau and I have always had a good relationship. She used to say that there were more important things in life than doing business. She didn't really have a vocation as a businesswoman, as a predator, as her father would have hoped. I had little contact with her about management. She was in charge of the magazines in the Publicor division. She sometimes called me to give messages to her father, but since the office was located on Bates Street in Outremont, she was a little out of the way. She wasn't as close to Quebecor employees at the head office as her two brothers Erik and Pierre-Karl were. If her office had been located on St. Jacques Street, she might have been more active in the action. She never really succeeded in taking her place in the bosom of Quebecor's management.

Her magazine projects were the subject of discussions between her and her father. She had a direct phone line to Mr. Péladeau for the management of his magazines. If Isabelle had had the desire to make her mark in management, she

could have been president. Very intelligent, very human, and playful, she preferred a less hectic lifestyle, less overwhelmed by work. She knew how to delegate, and she trusted her world.

We met a few times to attend shows, to share a meal with her father, or to collaborate on various projects. The last project was the preparation of a souvenir album published after the death of Mr. Péladeau 2. She had asked me to help her with some details. This special booklet was published a week after her father's funeral and it was a publishing feat to see it on the newsstands so quickly, in early January 1998.

During my time at Quebecor, Pierre-Karl Péladeau's work was mainly in the printing industry. We collaborated on a few occasions when he gave lectures at various events where he replaced his father. People were happy when Pierre-Karl went because he was charismatic. I would prepare a draft text for him, as I did for his father, and he would add his personal touch. His speeches were very different from those of his father. As much as Mr. Péladeau liked anecdotes and humorous quotes, Pierre-Karl preferred a methodical style containing technical and complex descriptions.

Pierre-Karl was brilliant and very competent in finance. If he had not been at Quebecor, he would probably be in a high position in a brokerage firm today.

As early as 1990, he had begun to make a name for himself with the acquisition of the U.S. printing company Maxwell Graphic at a cost of \$510 million. Pierre-Karl led the negotiations with a masterful hand. His father greatly appreciated his performance in this file. In 1993, he began modernizing the printing techniques of the Journal de Montréal. At the same time, he triggered a lockout as soon as the negotiations for the renewal of the collective agreement for press workers began, on September 19, 1993, to be precise. There had never been a strike since the founding of the newspaper. The newspaper was printed in Cornwall, Ontario throughout the conflict. Pierre-Karl had imposed his

ideas, but they were perhaps a little too radical for his father's taste.

He was later appointed president of Quebecor Printing Europe, a division created specifically to rebuild the company's presence on the other side of the Atlantic. It was at this point that Pierre-Karl made his first steps in the business.

its mark in management and negotiations. While in France, he concluded major agreements, adding important acquisitions to the Quebecor empire.

Here is a summary list of these:

- December 1993: acquisition of a majority stake in the Fécomme Group;
- February 1995: acquisition of the Jean Didier Group in France and Hunter Print in England;
- January 1996: acquisition of the assets of the Jacques Lopès Group, the second largest offset printer in France, and acquisition of a sixty percent interest in Inter-Routage, a French company specializing in bookbinding and distribution.

Pierre-Karl made Quebecor Printing the leading commercial printer in France. His biggest coup was the acquisition of the Jean Didier Group. Pierre-Karl remained in France until the death of his father in 1997.

As for the other children, Anne-Marie, Esther, and Simon-Pierre, I didn't have a close relationship with them. They were younger, still studying, or were not working in the family business; at least not yet.

Jean, the youngest, was born in 1991, the year I started at Quebecor. "Little Jean" was practically the son of Quebecor and Pierre Péladeau's immediate entourage. He often came to visit us on the 13th floor when he spent Friday afternoons with his father, before returning to his home in Sainte-Adèle



for the weekend. Germaine Miron, receptionist, and sister of the poet Gaston Miron, played babysitter more often than other members of the staff. You had to see “Petit Jean” running all over the floor and entertain everyone: a real ray of sunshine. He would talk to the secretaries, and tell them stories.

We watched “Little John” grow up, so to speak. His father was very present in the child’s life, and he often played with him. It seemed like he was twenty years younger in those moments.

Even if, at times, you would have thought you could see a grandfather spoiling his grandson 3, Mr. Péladeau considered for the first time in his life that he was acting like a father. You had to see him hold “Little John” by the hand and call himself a father.

As a child, “Little John” was already a very bright and intelligent child. You had to hear him tell his jokes and riddles. One day, for example, to a secretary who told him an anecdote to distract him, John asked:

“Did you see that on TV or did you read it in Le Journal de Montréal?”

He had an incredible presence of mind, and he was unpredictable and imaginative. One day, at a pow-wow in Sainte-Adèle 4, Mr. Péladeau had the idea of organizing friendly games to raise money for one of his charitable activities. Among other things, there was a yellow duck race, made of plastic of course. The idea was to bet on one of the participating ducks. Once the race was over, the toys were put in a barrel away and the guests got busy with other things.

We were surprised to see “Little John” walking through the crowd selling the ducks for \$2.00 each. Not only had he come up with the idea, but he had also trained little Maxime, son of Daniel Pilon, a well-known actor. The latter almost blushes with embarrassment to see his son at work with his host’s son. For his part, Mr. Péladeau was proud to see his son, still

so young, have the spirit of entrepreneurship. By the time we realized the scheme, he had already sold about fifteen ducks. Mr. Péladeau had not stopped saying: “He is following in his father’s footsteps! ”

On December 2, 1994, Mr. Péladeau completed his term as Chancellor of Université Sainte-Anne in Pointe- Anne.

of the Church in Nova Scotia. During the holiday season, he had to attend the handover ceremony. Since he used to bring “Little John” with him to events of all kinds or even classical music concerts, he decided that his son would be a part of the trip.

Mr. Péladeau was to deliver an end-of-term speech with all the protocols that such a speech requires. But “Little John” had decided otherwise. Not at all familiar with the protocol, he kept running to the stage as if he were at a children’s show and pushed the audacity to the point of targeting the official photographer in a cloak-and-dagger game. The poor photographer could not complain too much and had to maneuver with dexterity and diplomacy to get the job done. To make matters worse, Pierre Péladeau decided to make a joke to cheer up the dignitaries and, addressing the rector, he said :

“Mr. Rector, you’ve got a nice heist! “ and wanted to talk about the official hat.

After the event, and before returning to Montreal on the private jet, Mr. Péladeau asked us to stop at a fisherman’s house where he bought a live lobster for each of the members of the small group returning with him, including Luc Saint-Arnaud, then director of the National Westminster Bank of Canada. It was a way to make up for his afternoon indiscipline.

Everyone loved “Little John”. He was irresistible. He inherited his father’s seductive talents. I am convinced that Jean Péladeau will one day occupy an important place in the Quebecor empire, if he so desires, of course.

In conclusion, having met and rubbed shoulders with the children of the Péladeau clan for nearly seven years, I would say that they form a family like any other, apart from their colossal inheritance to manage.

While relations with members of the Péladeau family were easy, those with the other family, i.e. Quebecor executives, required a different form of diplomacy and a different way of approaching things. It is obvious that in a business, whether it is a family business or not, there are power struggles. There are always ambitious people, just like in a race, and may the best man win!

The same situation existed at Quebecor, and when I arrived in 1991, I realized that I would have a lot of work to do in this area. In the first few months, when I was writing the annual report, the Vice President of Finance confided in me:

“You know, Bernard, here you have to know how to judge and sometimes it may be better to challenge Pierre Péladeau’s recommendations. The big boss’s financial decisions may not always be appropriate and it would be better if you trusted me rather than him. ”

Coming from a co-worker, this remark worried me. I wondered how such competition could exist in someone Mr. Péladeau trusted. It is obvious that when a president makes a decision and the facts show that he should not, of course, he should be warned. But loyalty is essential.

As soon as I began working with Mr. Péladeau, I had established in my mind that I owed him unfailing loyalty. This was essential if I was to maintain a professional ethic and establish a solid bond of trust with my boss. Pierre Péladeau had opened the doors of his company to me and, in addition to welcoming me into his home, he was sure and certain that I would be loyal to him.

I replied to the VP of Finance that he was wrong about my job description, that my job was primarily to protect Pierre Péladeau in terms of public relations, and that there was no room for hypocrisy in any form. Needless to say, my



subsequent relations with my colleague in finance were rather lukewarm. I never questioned my choice, but then I had a few bumps in the road.

Pierre Péladeau had a particular strategy when he was hiring executives to run his company. He always made a point of finding two experts in the sector of the subsidiary to be managed, but two people of opposite temperaments with different management styles. Necessarily, these two people got along more or less well and tried to outdo each other. Mr. Péladeau thus ensured that he maintained some form of control over the subsidiary; he was assured that neither of the two managers could be lazy or play behind his back. This clever strategy, which did not appear in human resources guides, was nevertheless worth many others, he believed.

At the Quebecor printing plants, I saw that this form of rivalry existed between Charles Cavell and Jean Neveu. We must not misunderstand or interpret these remarks in the first degree. The managers of the subsidiaries didn't necessarily like each other personally or didn't always share the same vacation spots, but they always worked for the company's success.

The personalities of Mr. Cavell and Mr. Nephew were diametrically opposed.

Mr. Cavell came to Quebecor with the acquisition of Bell's Ronalds Printing in 1988. He had a very American vision of business where efficiency and profitability were paramount. I really enjoyed working with him. Our first collaboration was the publication of the 1991 annual report. At the time, Quebecor Printing was not listed on the stock exchange, so the activities were included in the holding company's report. Cavell explained to me in direct style how the section on printing plants should be written. He then knew how to withdraw and delegate. The way he worked reminded me of my experience with people like Brian Mulroney. They explain what they want, delegate the work, and judge only on the final product. Not on how it was produced.

Jean Neveu was always polite, and kind, but we didn't have "chemistry" as the expression goes.

In 1992, Quebecor Printing was officially listed on the stock exchange and this subsidiary began to take a very important place in the Quebecor empire. A strategy specific to this division was then developed at all levels, including communications.

Charles Cavell was a visionary capable of imposing his ideas and carrying out an acquisition in an admirable and, above all, efficient manner. He was demanding of others, but even more so of himself. He greatly developed the English-speaking market, and Mr. Péladeau said that if Quebecor had made an important breakthrough there, it was thanks to the contribution of the English-speaking Charles Cavell. The latter was the one who, in management, understood the American and English-Canadian markets best. In my opinion, Charles Cavell is the person who is most responsible for Quebecor World's success in North America.

Other high-caliber people have come to Quebecor, including Daniel Paillé, who was probably one of the most dynamic executives I have ever worked with. He served as Vice President, Development and reported directly to Pierre Péladeau. Things clicked between him and me from the beginning and we became good friends. This friendship lasted until he left; he had decided to go into politics, much to the disappointment of Mr. Péladeau, who adored him. But he respected his choice and always supported it.

Appointed Minister of Industry and Commerce in the Parti Québécois government, Daniel Paillé was appointed Minister of Industry and Commerce.

Noteworthy is the creation of the Paillé plan, whose objective was to help entrepreneurs get their projects off the ground. The government guaranteed a loan of up to \$50,000. With hindsight, I wonder if Daniel Paillé did not draw on his experience at Quebecor to implement such a plan.

As for the weekly newspapers, I really enjoyed working with Michel Saint-Louis, who had already been a collaborator of Conrad Black, a newspaper magnate. Mr. Saint-Louis had the mandate to give new impetus to Pierre Péladeau's weekly newspapers. I liked his style and he would certainly have been very successful at Quebecor. Unfortunately, he did not have the opportunity to put forward his recovery plans; due to health problems, he had to retire prematurely. Michel Saint-Louis had known Mr. Péladeau in 1973 during the strike by La Voix de l'Est in Granby. He had requested the support of the founder of the Journal de Montréal to launch a new daily newspaper in the Granby area. Mr. Péladeau refused, saying that he would never again launch a newspaper to replace another on strike. He had lived through the experience with Le Journal de Montréal and almost had to give up when La Presse came back because circulation had dropped so much. Only his determination had saved Le Journal de Montréal from closing because even his main advisors had encouraged him to turn the page and invest his profit elsewhere.

After recovering, Michel Saint-Louis moved to the Gatineau region where he now runs the Aylmer racetrack. I have had the pleasure of seeing him again at equestrian events in Montreal because we share a passion for horses.

The time Mr. Saint-Louis spent at Quebecor was enough for him to teach me many details about Conrad Black's personality. I was better able to compare Mr. Black and Mr. Péladeau.

Mr. Saint-Louis had worked with Conrad Black at The Record newspaper in Sherbrooke, while the latter was the owner, along with Peter G. White and David Radler.

The trio led by Mr. Black bought The Record for \$18,000 in the summer of 1968. It operated the weekly and used it to acquire several other weeklies, particularly on the North Shore of Quebec. It was Michel Saint-Louis who was responsible for managing the operations of the weekly

newspapers on the North Shore. Black's intention was to start a daily newspaper distributed from Baie-Saint-Paul to Blanc-Sablon. To do so, he wanted to transform the newspaper L'Avenir de Sept-Îles, which had three free weekly editions and one sold edition, and the Côte-Nord newspaper in Baie-Comeau with a weekly edition, into a single daily. This new daily would have been printed in Sept-Îles. Everything seemed promising, except that with the election of René Lévesque in 1976, Conrad Black's trio folded their bags for Toronto. Mr. Black sold The Record to Georges MacLaren for \$865,000, forty-eight times the price paid. Black has often boasted about this bargain.

Strangely enough, it was Pierre Péladeau who, on December 19, 1975, bought the newspaper L'Avenir and its printing plant in Sept-Îles, as well as Éditions Nordiques de Baie-Comeau. Later, on December 1, 1987, he also acquired the Sherbrooke newspaper The Record, for which he paid two million dollars.

In order to close a deal and get what he wanted from an acquisition, Mr. Black used the same stratagems or tactics as Pierre Péladeau. He could be just as creative in his methods of seduction. Even though the two men were similar, there was a great rivalry between them and especially a great difference in their way of seeing things. Thus, for Pierre Péladeau, the objective was to cover all of Quebec with his publications. Conrad Black had a completely different aspiration: from coast to coast to coast. For Black, the empire he was building was to extend from Newfoundland to Vancouver.

I have always had a lot of admiration for Conrad Black, almost as much as I had for Pierre Péladeau.

I had met Mr. Black a few times in Ottawa and Montreal. I also had to work with his partner Peter G. White while he was at the firm of Brian Mulroney. Mr. White contacted me to offer me a job in Ottawa in 1984. I have always had great respect for the Hollinger Group. Mr. Péladeau knew of my admiration



for these two English-speaking businessmen and, although he never blamed me, I knew it bothered him.

Conrad Black and Pierre Péladeau did try to team up and do a few projects together, but they never managed to get along.

Life always has surprises in store for us, and with Pierre Péladeau, there were many. Very intuitive, he was interested in a Laval weekly newspaper owned by Pierre Francœur. Mr. Péladeau, who was looking for new advertising for his network of weekly newspapers, had heard about Francœur's work and was interested in him and his newspaper. He wanted to buy the paper and hire Pierre Francœur to run it. The two men decided to meet to talk. Mr. Francœur told Mr. Péladeau that he would come to the meeting with Sylvie Sauriol, his wife, who owned a video rental store at the time. When Mr. Péladeau met the couple, he immediately realized the potential of Ms. Sauriol who was negotiating for his spouse at the time. She possessed the qualities he admired and sought in his partners. Mr. Péladeau never bought the newspaper, but he invited Sylvie Sauriol to join the management staff of Quebecor's weekly newspaper division. But Pierre Francœur was not left behind. A little later, he became publisher of Le Journal de Montréal, and then President and CEO of Sun Media Corporation 6.

Mr. Francœur was known for his diplomacy. Under the presidency of Pierre Péladeau, who read and commented on his newspaper from time to time, Mr. Francœur was able to deal with the often stinging criticism of the big boss, who followed his publication to the letter. Was there an ad missing? Were there more obituaries at the competitor La Presse? Was there an exclusivity that was overlooked? Mr. Péladeau grabbed the phone and quickly made his remarks to the person in charge. Mr. Francœur had a lot of patience and the ability to deal with his boss's excessive language.

It was not always easy to satisfy Pierre Péladeau's desires, as there was sometimes a wide gap between his wishes and their fulfillment. If there was one person who had to take up

this challenge more often than he did, it was Marie Rémillard, director of the Orchestre métropolitain until April 1998. On the one hand, she had to compose with a group of musicians, artists with their own personalities and sensibilities, and on the other hand, with the great patron of the arts, in whom the temperament of a businessman predominated. The Orchestre métropolitain was “the cause” that Mr. Péladeau cherished. But it had its favorite composers and musicians. Since he financed the orchestra, he had his “special requests” in return. Marie Rémillard had the great talent to meet Mr. Péladeau’s expectations while taking into account the imperatives of a large orchestra.

Another conductor who stood out was André Gourd, a lawyer by training. He had left Quebecor when I joined. His departure allowed me to take advantage of his magnificent and vast office, but he later returned as Vice President, Acquisitions. He left permanently in the year prior to Mr. Péladeau’s death to accept a position at Arthur & Andersen. He was instrumental in the acquisition of the Archambault Group.

André Gourd and his wife Martine Saint-Louis, daughter of Judge Jean-Paul Saint-Louis, were close friends of Pierre Péladeau. Martine, a lawyer by training, was Pierre Péladeau’s executive assistant and Judge Saint-Louis his executor.

André Gourd has carried out many ad hoc projects. He was a difficult guy to pin down. He was nice, but he could be the one to deliver the final blow to you. So he didn’t have a lot of friends at Quebecor. Mr. Péladeau respected him and that was what mattered. Personally, I liked him.

André Gourd had warned me that my unequivocal loyalty was surely very useful to my boss, but that it would become dangerous for me in the long run. I knew that if Mr. Péladeau suddenly disappeared, I would probably no longer have a job at Quebecor. Mr. Gourd strongly advised me to prepare for my trip. But I could not resign myself to leaving Pierre Péladeau. We do not leave the boat during the storm!

Other high-level executives, not necessarily from the business community, have also moved to Quebecor. Jacques Girard was one of these. A former Deputy Minister of Education, he left Télé-Québec to join Quebecor. This kind of hiring at the senior management level had to balance the company by further refining its management style. Basically, it is difficult to associate two such different characters: one colorful and hot, the other patient and polite sometimes worthy of a diplomat. Some of Mr. Girard's friends did not understand his decision to join Quebecor, because the two men "clashed", they were so different in styles. Against all expectations, the two men worked together for several years and jointly carried out many projects. Jacques Girard is now President of Montreal International.

Pierre Péladeau was very well supported by his secretariat, made up of Micheline Bourget and Nicole Germain. Ms. Bourget had been working for him for several years when I started working at Quebecor. Mr. Péladeau also had an assistant, Sylvie Laplante, a lawyer, who took care of his personal affairs: the house, all the private staff such as helicopter pilots, drivers, gardeners, maids, etc. She made sure that Mr. Péladeau did not lack anything at his residence and she coordinated the schedules of the staff to this end. Sylvie left the company to take up another position in a Quebecor subsidiary shortly before Mr. Péladeau's death, but she has always remained very close to him.

With the help of his secretarial staff, Pierre Péladeau had created a protective screen for himself, while ensuring that his private and professional lives were well organized and regulated like music paper. His secretaries monitored his schedule, assisted him in all his tasks, and coordinated his correspondence and files. They had a primary role. Even in terms of communications, I had to collaborate with his assistants on a daily basis. They were all loyal to Mr. Péladeau and they felt a great deal of affection and friendship

for him, despite his mood swings. They knew they had to put their emotions aside and react only professionally.

Mr. Péladeau had the same respect and the same attitude toward everyone, whether they were support staff or senior executives. They were all treated the same.

The only thing Mr. Péladeau coordinated on his own and for which he preferred not to give many details was his dating, but, again, he sometimes needed our collaboration to get away with it and avoid unnecessary injury. the favorite of the moment.

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Pierre-Karl Péladeau, Pierre Péladeau and Érik Péladeau - 1993





**Pierre Péladeau at his home in Ste-Adèle**



**Pierre Péladeau and members of his family at Pavillon des arts of Sainte-Adèle**





**Érik Péladeau, Isabelle Péladeau and Anne-Marie Péladeau at Pavillon des Arts**



**Isabelle Péladeau - 1996**





Honorary doctorate Université Laval - Québec - June 1997

## Chapter 7

### The Art of doing business

Pierre Péladeau's business philosophy was based on a fundamental principle that he explained in a few words: "You miss a deal, you get a deal. "In French, one would say: "A project of lost, ten of found. "He said that you should never get emotionally attached to a case and that as soon as you see the negotiations going in the wrong direction or that the price to be paid exceeds the objectives set at the start, you have to let go. , turn on your heels and concentrate your efforts elsewhere. There was no point wasting time and money trying to get a deal that wouldn't bring you a profit.

According to Pierre Péladeau, profit was the element on which many entrepreneurs did not know how to target their efforts, contrary to all logic. He explained his theory of profit using the comparisons he had learned from a Dominican brother, a metaphysics professor, during his years at university, about the sack of apples that had to be sold for more than it had been paid for. if we wanted to make a profit.

He also recounted another lived anecdote, that of a young woman who came to ask him for advice about her craft workshop. Sales had increased, but she continued to suffer losses. Mr. Péladeau quickly noticed that the lady paid her suppliers within thirty days, while she allowed her customers to wait up to forty-five days before paying her. She believed that by being conciliatory, she would promote the growth of her business and increase the volume of her clientele. His problem was there. Since the profit margin was slim initially, she could not reap a final profit due to interest charges due

to the delay between paying accounts payable and collecting accounts receivable. He had offered to get paid on delivery. When Mr. Péladeau gave lectures or gave interviews, he always mentioned specific examples, such as apples or the craft store.

Pierre Péladeau's entrepreneurship took root in his teens. At 14, he took on running a tennis club for \$ 6 a week. He was also in charge of the adjoining restaurant concession. He sold soft drinks, cigarettes, and snacks. "I quickly learned that if I sold beer, it would pay a lot more. "

Almost everyone who attended his speeches also heard of the Christmas tree era. In college, students were offered post office jobs over the holiday break. We were offering \$ 75 for 10 days of work. Mr. Péladeau thought that was not enough, he wanted a better-paying job.

It was then that he had the idea to sell Christmas trees. But he had no capital to buy the trees. He put into practice a relatively simple trick: he would order the trees on Friday morning at the market and he would ask the suppliers to deliver them to him around 8 o'clock that same evening. The supplier in question would show up on time, unload the goods, and then demand their due. Mr. Péladeau paid it with a check, being fully aware that the banks would be closed until Monday morning. If the salesman grumbled too much, Mr. Péladeau would tell him to take back his merchandise and leave. When a farmer had spent a whole day wandering from market to market, all he wanted was to go home. Putting the cargo back on the truck wasn't very tempting. None of the fir suppliers took back the merchandise.

Mr. Péladeau had the whole weekend to sell his merchandise and go cover the check at the bank on Monday morning. Rather than the \$ 75 offered for the post office job, he cashed in \$ 1,000 for its trees.

At 16, he also sold tickets to shows he was organizing. It was then that he acquired his passion and love for the arts and artists.



He dreamed of becoming an impresario. His first investment was \$ 35 for the purchase of a car, an old model Chrysler. He was planning on touring the province with a newly founded theater company, but he didn't get very far. The only performance of his tour ended with an evening at Sainte-Scholastique, near Mirabel; much of the audience jumped over the fence and watched the show for free. In addition, the Chrysler gave up its soul on the way, and the troop returned pitifully by bus. The theater was definitely not profitable.

The following summer, Pierre Péladeau decided to do another tour, but this time with a single artist, pianist André Mathieu. They set off in the direction of Abitibi. The first evening, in Amos, was the triumph. The next day, the pianist, in the grip of moods, decided not to play. Mr. Péladeau, who had never been patient, immediately packed up and returned to Montreal, leaving the pianist there.

In college, thanks to a more fortunate friend who invited him to his home to listen to records, he discovered classical music. He literally gorged himself on it. In one night he could listen to up to five Beethoven concertos, as many Mozart and Schubert's great lieder. A few times during the week, he attended big concerts at the Her Majesty Theater in Montreal, entering by the fire escape, as he did not have the money to buy a seat.

At the same time, McGill University students presented public debates at Le Plateau, the Place des Arts at the time. So he threw himself into organizing debates. He resumed the formula which consisted in opposing two groups of two students each on a given subject. But since he wanted to wake up the audience, Mr. Péladeau decided on topics that were lighter than usual, not at all stilted, like "mustache or shaved", "blonde or brunette", "Sugar Daddy or student". The attendance quickly rose from two hundred to seven hundred people.

During the three years of his law studies, he presented more than twenty-five debates, each equally unbridled. He also

decided to make the event even more interesting by inviting famous people as hosts: Jeannette Bertrand, Jean-Pierre Masson, Roger Baulu, Émile Genest, and Monique Mercure. In the end, Mr. Péladeau filled the 1,200-seat room with his debates on trivial subjects. The use of personalities to attract spectators was repeated with the Pavillon des Arts in Sainte-Adèle. When I proposed the idea to him in 1992, he immediately accepted it, telling me that he himself had applied this trick during his university studies.

This success strongly encouraged him to take back the impresario he had left in Val-d'Or a few years earlier. In Quebec, the market was occupied by only one recognized impresario: a man named Nicolas de Koudriasef. At the end of his studies, around 1950, Pierre Péladeau began to set up high-end concerts. A great admirer of Beniamino Gigli, an Italian tenor, he decided to contact him in Rome to invite him to perform in Quebec.

But the answer was delayed. The Italian artist was not sure he wanted to perform in Quebec. During this time, Mr. Péladeau didn't really have a specific job and he hated waiting. In addition, he had to earn a living. A friend then offered to sell a small neighborhood newspaper, *Le Journal de Rosemont*. He accepted.

Six months later he received a reply from Mr. Gigli who, in the end, had decided not to come to America. This refusal definitively turned the page on Pierre Péladeau's vocation as an impresario. However, I believe that he never really lost the interest he had in artists and that deep down he would have liked to become

a manager of artists like René Angélil or Guy Cloutier. Professionally, he never really saw these two men, but he would surely have liked to reach the heights reached by the manager of Céline Dion. *Le Blues du Businessman*, a song by Claude Dubois, applies perfectly to Pierre Péladeau.

If he finally opted for editing, it was not a passion to begin with. He had to make a living, and selling advertising seemed

like an easy way to do it. He told me towards the end of his life that he initially didn't know anything about printing. For him, it was a way to make money, nothing more. His passion for this industrial sector developed later, but it never reached the intensity he had felt for artists.

Pierre Péladeau's attitude at his beginnings as an entrepreneur remained the same until the end of his life, regardless of the amount involved. He surprised everyone by his speed of reaction, his unpredictability, by his courage, and, sometimes, the audacity of the actions he took. If he didn't get the results or the deal he wanted, he could turn on his heels and there was no point in trying to convince him to reverse his decision.

An interesting fact to note is the way he protected himself against drunkenness. Alcohol was the "relaxer" he looked for after work, but he would never sign a financial transaction while intoxicated. When his alcohol addiction became known, people repeatedly tried to get him drunk in order to get him to sign a "deal". He was willing to meet his clients and was open to discussions, usually over a well-watered restaurant meal. But he never signed anything if he had been drinking. When he closed a deal, he was sober.

He often attributed the credit for his business success to a lesson taught by one of his uncles early in his career, in the mid-1950s. The latter was allegedly wealthy and Mr. Péladeau wanted to borrow him. money. Elmire, the mother of Mr. Péladeau, warned him, however, against the harshness of the uncle in question, known to be tough in business. Convinced of his qualities as a salesman, Pierre Péladeau prepared his spiel and went to his uncle, who received him with great civility. When his presentation was over, his uncle stood up, stretched both his arms across his desk, and said solemnly: "Listen to me, my kid, to my right I have all the accounts receivable here and to my left all my accounts payable. Here's my whole business, \$ 90 million a year in two files on either side of my desk. It's not complicated. Do the same. "



**A whole lesson in the simplicity of management: “customers and suppliers”. Pierre Péladeau had just learned to manage the money he did not yet have. Mr. Péladeau walked away without the \$ 5,000 he wanted, but he understood one thing: In business, sometimes you have to finance your projects with other people’s money and with supplier credit.**

**It was from then on that he began to surround himself with experts and stopped doing everything on his own. He chose first an accountant who knew how to talk to a banker, then a lawyer who ensured that all financial transactions complied with regulations while enjoying the largesse of the law. A single word guided all his acquisitions: “profit”.**

**Mr. Péladeau always said that you have to think big and dare. He has applied this principle all his life, but he has also always known how to stop when the situation is in danger of failing. You had to know how to control your attachment to an operation. According to Mr. Péladeau, if you become sentimental about a project, you risk not seeing the pitfalls and getting cheated.**

**He cited as an example his experience in the United States and his attempt to establish a daily in the US market. He had started the Philadelphia Journal on December 5, 1977. Contrary to rumor, he had not invested**

**in this project on a whim. An opportunity had presented itself, and he had studied the matter thoroughly. He had been to Philadelphia several times and he even asked Jacques Beauchamp, sports reporter for the Journal de Montreal, to accompany him there. At first glance, he found similarities between Philadelphia and Montreal. As we know, Pierre Péladeau gave birth to The Philadelphia Journal, with a circulation of 100,000 copies. By 1981, the newspaper was on the right track and its future looked bright, until the unions, led by Teamsters, put a damper on it. Not that the owner was opposed to the unionization of the employees, but the dialogue was established in a one-sided, unopened balance of power.**

**Mr. Péladeau negotiated for a while, then he got tired and let them know that if the union persisted in its refusal, it would simply close the doors. The union thought Mr. Péladeau was bluffing and the employees voted against the proposal. As promised, he packed up and left, closing the newspaper. Union representatives contacted him shortly after, but it was too late. It was not knowing the little French Canadian. He had invested almost \$ 15 million in this project, but he did not hang on to it. He no longer had confidence.**

**In a way, history repeated itself with the Montreal Daily News launched on March 15, 1988, which appeared for less than a year. Mr. Péladeau had agreed to start this daily according to a well-established development plan and above all within a determined budget that he did not want to exceed at any cost. He had been convinced that there was room in The Gazette's territory for another daily. Presumably, there was not. Published in tabloid format, the newspaper failed to reach cruising speed and generate profits ensuring it a permanent place in the market. The performance schedule was not being met and advertising revenue was slow to emerge.**

**The newspaper was in turmoil when the accountants of the new daily, as well as those at Quebecor, asked Mr. Péladeau to stretch the funding. They went there cautiously, offering him: "If we put in two more millions, we would have time. "But Pierre Péladeau, true to his instincts and above all to his basic rule of never hanging on to a case, decided to shut down the Montreal Daily News. It was a difficult closure because employees lost their jobs there and there was a lot of hope in the day-to-day. The loss amounted to \$ 10 million, but, not being sentimental, Mr. Péladeau stood his ground. No profit, no business.**

**Pierre Péladeau repeated it until his last lecture.**

**"I'm going to the point," he explained one day to the Rimouski Chamber of Commerce in November 1997. I listen a lot and I make sure that we don't hang around with the puck. Five-year action plans have never been a big part of my desk.**

We manage the company, project by project, division by division, and together we make sure that Quebecor progresses. In my own book, this way of doing things is called strategic planning and so far it hasn't worked too badly. You have to take your work to heart and do it well, it's simple, but it is effective. To be successful in business, you just need to use common sense and know how to find opportunities for profit. Profit is the fundamental element that determines whether a business can continue to operate or not. It makes me smile when I hear the theorists, consultants, and business philosophers giving big demonstrations of how to do business, when they've never done business themselves, except in books. If I buy a bag of apples for a dollar, I have to sell it for a higher price or I'll be playing Santa. I have to sell my apples for a dollar and fifty and it is the fifty cents of profit that will allow my business to grow. The principle may sound simple, but in business, it's no more complicated than that, whether you're talking about \$ 100 or \$ 100 million. ”

Mr. Péladeau has become an expert in the art of doing business. The empire he created is proof of that. The turning point in his career was undoubtedly the founding of the Journal de Montréal on June 15, 1964. He had been thinking for some time of creating a daily, in particular, to keep his presses at the Journal de Rosemont as busy as possible. It was then that the strike of the newspaper La Presse occurred which created a major vacuum in the market. He saw an opportunity present itself, and he jumped on it with both feet. He made the decision in just a few hours.

It was a race against time: he had no journalists, no newswires, in short, no newsroom. He sought out journalists from the radio to train his team and provide them with access to news agencies. In two days, Le Journal de Montréal was on newsstands. It was printing 80,000 copies in January 1965.

When the La Presse newspaper strike ended, Mr. Péladeau, who hoped to have found a lasting niche for his newborn baby, suffered a dramatic drop in circulation. The publication had grown to 12,000 copies by the time he said it, but he had racked up a profit of \$ 100,000. It was a considerable sum at the time.

At that point, a fateful decision had to be made: close or continue. If he decided to continue, he would have to invest almost \$ 800,000.

Pierre Péladeau has always said that business decisions are rational, down-to-earth decisions. However, going against the advice of his accountant and his lawyer who strongly advised him not to continue this adventure, he listened to his instincts and clung to what was to become his “biggest French daily in” America “.

The operation was not without some difficulties, it goes without saying, if only in the area of distribution. The distributor he was under contract with decided not to honor the deal. Still convinced of his choice, Mr. Péladeau resolved to find his own distribution house. He bought 50 trucks in 24 hours. There was no longer a single pickup truck available on the island of Montreal, but Messageries Dynamiques was born.

The Journal de Québec was created under such incredible circumstances.

“When we launched Le Journal de Québec,” said Péladeau, “we didn’t waste time with tons of money. We didn’t have one. All we had was a frantic desire to start a newspaper in Quebec. ”

The idea of launching a new daily had first germinated in the mind of Serge Roy, a former journalist for the Journal de Montréal. The latter had moved to Quebec and he telephoned his former boss two to three times a week to try to convince him to start a new daily in Quebec. He was trying to prove to her that the local papers were boring. But it took more than these simple arguments.



At the time, in 1967, there were three newspapers in Quebec: L'Événement, L'Action catholique, and Le Soleil. According to Mr. Roy, one or maybe even two of these publications would soon disappear. Having started Le Journal de Montréal three years earlier, Mr. Péladeau was rather lukewarm about starting a new business so quickly. He wanted to establish a solid foundation for his daily life in Montreal before venturing into another adventure. But Serge Roy's prediction turned out to be correct and, as if fate had commanded it, the newspaper L'Événement closed its doors. On March 6, 1967, the first issue of the Journal de Québec came out of the Montreal press.

"The experience of launching this new daily in Quebec is like a miracle," Pierre Péladeau later told a conference. The least that can be said is that the marketing did not follow the traditional rules of other dailies. Not all communications specialists gave us long to live. The Journal de Québec was the only daily to be printed for years at 340 kilometers from its point of sale. A well-known and well-respected columnist had pontificated that the newspaper would fall with the autumn leaves, and maybe even before. You can guess he swallowed his words ... "

According to the big boss of Quebecor, you had to be completely crazy to embark on such an adventure which offered virtually no chance of success. Journalists did their news gathering work in Quebec City and mailed the results of their labor by wire to Montreal, or the news by telephone, directly to the print shop. The model was then drawn there before printing it on rotary presses in Montreal. Then things got more complicated; once the newspaper was printed, around 2 am, it had to be delivered to Quebec.

You have to imagine the scene: 40,000 copies to be picked up in Montreal and sent to Quebec by 7 am. Mr. Péladeau recounted these difficult beginnings on numerous occasions: "Two hundred miles every day to make Le Journal de Québec. It was a contract. And that, was when the storms

weren't stopping our truck in the snow banks. Or when it wasn't a flat tire or a trucker who needed a little too much to warm up before leaving ... “

Despite everything, they persevered and Le Journal de Québec became the most important daily newspaper in Quebec City. “Whether it makes Conrad Black happy or not,” Mr. Péladeau hastened to add.

Today, Le Journal de Québec is printed on its own presses which required an investment of \$ 11.5 million in 1989.

When he bought Donohue on July 7, 1987, at a cost of \$ 356 million, he needed a partner because it was a very large sum of money. He couldn't afford it on his own. He let it be rumored that he was looking for a partner with cash to invest. André Bisson, vice-president of the Bank of Nova Scotia in Quebec, whom Mr. Péladeau knew well, called him one day to speak to Robert Maxwell. Mr. Péladeau had never heard of it, but he was familiar with his publications including the London Mirror.

Robert Maxwell had a reputation for being a “name dropper”. His conversations were continually infused with names like George Bush (Sr.), and Margaret Thatcher, not to mention a few crowned heads of the British monarchy. Almost every banker on the planet had opened an account for him, which they would later regret. In England, he was the baron of the press.

It was not so much the character or his address book that piqued the interest of Pierre Péladeau, but the circulation of 4,000,000 copies per day of the London Mirror. As he was about to buy a paper mill, he was going to need good customers. His friend from the Bank of Nova Scotia put him in touch with Mr. Maxwell, who showed up at the Ritz Carlton in Montreal the next day.

In the meantime, Pierre Péladeau had gathered some information about the character and his activities. He learned that Robert Maxwell was having paper feed problems in

England precisely because of fierce competition from Murdock, his opposite in that market.

Arriving at the meeting fixed in a suite at the Ritz, Mr. Péladeau presented his “deal” to him in an expedient manner.

“Mr. Maxwell, my proposal is this: 51% for Quebecor, 49% for you, and I want 156 million dollars. That’s it! ”

Mr Maxwell reacted vigorously to this totally unacceptable proposal. He raised his voice, and the discussion continued like that for a few hours; he wanted a 50/50 combination and he didn’t give up. Mr. Péladeau either.

“My guess is 51/49, not 50/50. Is this clear enough? Take it or leave it, ”says Péladeau.

They talked a little longer, then, exasperated, Pierre Péladeau got up and went out. It was over. Robert Maxwell might say to him: “No, no, stay, we’ll talk,” Mr. Péladeau was already in front of the elevator. If you miss a deal, you get a deal!

Finally, Robert Maxwell ran behind Mr. Péladeau in the corridor and brought him back into the suite. He ended up accepting the Quebecor boss’s initial offer, and he invested \$ 156 million.

Robert Maxwell then telephoned him twice a day from London. A few weeks later, Mr. Maxwell called him in disaster because the Donohue factory no longer had a president, and Mr. Péladeau had decided to appoint Charles-Albert Poissant. Mr. Maxwell disagreed because in his opinion Mr. Poissant knew nothing about the paper. He objected to the appointment and got a little angry on the phone. Mr. Péladeau cut his loud cries short by reminding him that he too knew nothing about paper when he agreed to invest his money in this factory. He also dotted the “i’s”:

“By the way, I wish you would once and for all remember that I own 51, and you 49%. Take note of it. I’m the boss. Poissant will be Donohue’s next president! ”

I have personally met Mr. Maxwell on three occasions. The character was out of the ordinary. Imposing, intriguing, almost mythical build, he exuded a very intense magnetism. Mr. Péladeau got on well with Mr. Maxwell, except that he had to remind him a few times that Quebecor was a majority partner. He also saw Mr. Maxwell as a valuable ally, a passport giving him assured access to the world market. Mr. Maxwell was in a way a star, an attraction in itself, that Mr. Péladeau had hosted, on a number of occasions, at his residence in Sainte-Adèle and in Montreal. Mr. Péladeau enjoyed socializing with the elite and Mr. Maxwell was one of them.

When Robert Maxwell died in November 1991 at the age of 68, I broke the news to Mr. Péladeau. He was convinced his partner in Donohue had been murdered. For him, the suicide thesis was absolutely out of the question; he had always seen Mr. Maxwell as a bon vivant, an optimist, a courageous being who loved life and knew how to make the most of it. Recall that Robert Maxwell was reported missing following a trip to sea on his yacht, Lady Ghislaine, in the Azores region. His body was recovered sometime after his disappearance. The investigation that followed revealed his financial situation. Just about everyone had been fooled by Robert Maxwell. The circumstances surrounding his death were never clarified. Pierre Péladeau did well: as a majority shareholder, he lost no power and, in addition, he was able to buy back the share of his late partner.

Another example of the detachment that Pierre Péladeau felt in a negotiation process is that which he displayed towards the Toronto Sun in June 1996. He had already experienced two failures in the operation of English-language dailies, but the buying of the Toronto Sun was based on completely different things. In the cases of the Philadelphia Journal and the Montreal Daily News, newspapers had to be created from scratch.



Those two failures had proven to him that it was better to buy a business that was already up and running, even if it was in deficit, with employees, equipment, turnover, and, most importantly, a list of customers. He could reorganize finances and management to make it profitable. From this perspective, the Toronto Sun was an interesting opportunity and, what is more, included the MacLean Hunter, already printed at Quebecor, as well as the magazine L'Actualité with which he had had a dispute.

Ted Rogers wanted to get out of the Toronto Sun because he needed cash to develop other industries. He was looking for a buyer and a good price. Pierre Péladeau, as always, had done his homework for this transaction. With his financial experts, he calculated the maximum price he wanted to pay, including restructuring costs, of \$ 12.75 a share. Upon acquisition, he was to cut around 500 jobs to implement the stimulus plan.

Mr. Péladeau wanted to acquire the Toronto Sun because it was to allow him a rapid entry into the English-Canadian market, but he was not alone in the race. Employees of the Ontario company also made an offer of \$ 16 to protect their jobs and avoid the layoffs advocated by Quebecor.

It was then that journalist Diane Francis, born in Chicago and living in Toronto, entered the scene. She published a hateful article on Quebecor in general and on Mr. Péladeau in particular, denouncing the purchase of an institution like the Toronto Sun by a French Canadian, who was also a nationalist. She called this acquisition project a tragedy! She also devoted the front page of the Financial Post to him. She had just added a political aspect to the financial gesture. It was unacceptable to hand over a flagship of the Canadian edition to a Quebecker.

This smear campaign was not unlike the case of Robert Campeau who had wanted, a few years earlier, to acquire the majority of the shares in a bank with a long English tradition. He had also suffered the wrath of fiercely Francophobic

opponents. Campeau was not a Quebecker, he was born in Ontario, but his mother tongue was French.

At one point, the political aspect clearly took over in handling this Toronto Sun case. Pierre Péladeau was ready to fight for the principle and could have come up with a higher bid to show he could win. He had plenty of means. Despite the provocation and despite the temptation, he refused to exceed the maximum amount he had set for himself. He gave up on the project.

Beyond the price initially offered to Rogers, Mr. Péladeau considered that the acquisition was no longer viable. The future proved him right, because the employees had to sell in October 1998. Strangely enough, it was Pierre-Karl Péladeau who bought the company. He too had to face the wrath of Diane Francis, but he managed to impose himself and take the victory. He said, somewhat to taunt Ms. Francis after the signing: "It's a great day for Canada. "

But in 1996, it was no longer a good deal for Pierre Péladeau and he backed down. This is how Mr. Péladeau reacted in his deals: no emotion, no attachment influenced his judgment. It was a major difference between him and Robert Campeau, for example. The latter experienced a descent into hell guided by pride: a decision he paid dearly when he acquired Federated Stores.

Pierre Péladeau knew how to manage his ambitions according to his means.

Another acquisition project that I experienced alongside Pierre Péladeau was that of the Quatre-Saisons television network in April 1997.

It was Jean-Luc Mongrain, a well-known host, and producer, who approached Pierre Péladeau to get him interested in the purchase of Télévision Quatre-Saisons. Mr. Mongrain wanted to make an offer to buy, but he did not have all the necessary financing. He was looking for a partner. Mr. Péladeau had already refused to buy Télé-Métropole because he found the price too high at the time. By comparison, the asking price

for TQS was a godsend to him. He therefore agreed to take part in the acquisition process, initially with Jean-Luc Mongrain, whom he liked very much. But the latter had to withdraw from the project along the way. He had a private production company which put him in a difficult position, and he preferred to remain a producer rather than become an owner.

Pierre Péladeau decided to continue the process without Mr. Mongrain. For the first time, he not only had to convince the seller to give him TQS at the price offered, but he also had to obtain permission from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to confirm this acquisition. It was a new experience for him, as he usually negotiated with the private sector. He always said he didn't like government contracts because there was too much paperwork. In addition, he always wanted to keep his distance from politics.

But to make this acquisition successful, he poured water into his wine and, above all, moderated his enthusiasm and public statements, unlike what he had done in the case of the Toronto Sun.

From the outset, Pierre Péladeau surrounded himself with key people to advise and support him in his efforts, including Franklin Delaney. This former owner of radio stations, originally from the Magdalen Islands, had experience in government agencies in addition to a solid knowledge of radio and television. In 1973, when the CRTC offered a license for a second television station in Montreal, Delaney became the owner.

In 1997, Franklin Delaney took charge of the consortium of caliber partners to compose the TQS consortium. The share split was as follows: Quebecor 58.5%, Cancom 19.5%, Cogeco 20%, Radio-Nord 1%, Radio-Saguenay and Télévision MBS 0.5% each. The president and CEO of Quebecor, however, agreed to the CRTC not to sit on the consortium's board of directors.

The offer to purchase was officially accepted by Videotron on April 11, 1997, the 72nd anniversary of the birth of Pierre Péladeau. The price paid was \$ 24 million plus working capital valued at \$ 9 million, for a total of \$ 34 million. The Quatre-Saisons network was a personal gift from Pierre Péladeau to get even closer to artists and culture. After his newspaper, he now had his television. This acquisition was a sort of second start and a return to his early passions. He wanted to participate in the activities of the station, but he was nevertheless cautious. He suggested, in particular, the hiring of Michel Jasmin, whom he described as “Larry King”, as well as that of Andrée Boucher. However, the programming director disagreed ... Television was not Mr. Péladeau’s area of expertise, and convergence with his other media did not inspire him. He bought TQS to have fun while calculating the risk. It was his birthday present, he said, but it also had to be profitable.

Those who, like me, took part in the negotiation process with Mr. Péladeau were as excited as he was by this new challenge. CRTC clearance now had to be obtained, and these hearings were prepared with

great care. As a precaution, Pierre Péladeau refused any interview with the media until the CRTC rendered its decision, on August 22, 1997. L. Yves Fortier, lawyer and president of the firm Ogilvy, represented Quebecor and had a challenge to prove that there would be no information monopoly, even if Quebecor also owned newspapers in Quebec and Montreal. Me Fortier is the greatest litigator I have had the pleasure of watching work. A true virtuoso. The consortium appointed P. Wilbrod Gauthier as Chairman of the Board and Franklin Delaney as President and CEO of the company.

TQS was the last acquisition of Pierre Péladeau before his death.

Pierre Péladeau’s interest in electronic media did not extend solely to television. Sometime earlier, in September 1995, Jean-Pierre Coallier, a well-known host and businessman,



had also approached Pierre Péladeau to invite Quebecor to become a partner in his project to create, in Montreal, a radio station broadcasting only music. classic.

“Monsieur P.” and this kind of station naturally went hand in hand. The Orchestre Métropolitain and the Pavillon des Arts could also have directly benefited from the spinoffs. I was in charge of the file for Quebecor and I tried to convince Pierre Péladeau. But you had to build the business from scratch. Mr. Péladeau would have preferred an existing classical music station. It was with regret and some sadness that I had to decline this offer, on behalf of my boss. Mr. Péladeau found that the return was spread over too long term according to his criteria, but he liked the project. Once again, he put his emotions aside, to make a thoughtful decision.

In this case, however, Pierre Péladeau was wrong. Jean-Pierre Coallier inaugurated his station on June 25, 1998, and the success was immediate. CJPX-FM broadcasts primarily from Île Sainte-Hélène to Montreal but has a second studio located at Place des Arts. According to the December 2002 polls, the station has more than 468,000 listeners and broadcasts 24 hours a day. Even Pierre-Karl Péladeau says he listens to this station ...

Pierre Péladeau was an entrepreneur at heart and he remained so until his death. While his projects could be large, some were the size of a small business. He applied himself to them with the same zeal, however, whether they were small or large.

In October 1994, I lived with Mr. Péladeau creating a newspaper, literally from the corner of his office.

He had always considered Rémi Marcoux as a sort of competitor, especially since the latter had studied at Quebecor. Mr. Péladeau had decided to launch a newspaper to tackle Les Affaires head-on. To achieve this, he revived an old publication which has not been published for some time.

The PARLONS AFFAIRES (Let's Talk Business) publication was designed as an insert and distributed to the network of

weeklies in the Laurentians region. This newspaper featured reports on local businesses using the infomercial method. Mr. Péladeau wanted to change the formula slightly: the items would be paid for by the company's suppliers, and not by the company itself. So when we did a report on Bombardier, we asked that company to provide a list of the suppliers to which we sold advertisements. Simple formula, but it proved to be extremely effective.

Mr. Péladeau liked the idea of his new project. He considered that he was thus taking a concrete step towards promoting regional entrepreneurship.

He, therefore, set out to publish a 32-page newspaper format. He didn't want to spend too much on this project and he was considering managing it prudently from his office. For the first few editions, he decided on the titles of the reports himself and he asked me, very kindly, to write articles in my spare time. It wasn't too complicated, and he was so happy to "get his hands on" his new invention that I wholeheartedly participated in it. Diane Bougie, former director of the weeklies, was in charge of recruiting clients.

He had also asked for the occasional collaboration of a few secretaries. It seemed like he could never resist the temptation to test his abilities, to see if he was going to succeed again.

You had to see me greet the advertisers in my office, listen to them, pick up their advertising material, and quickly redirect them to the exit because I only had two minutes to spare. Between phone calls and carrying out my daily tasks, I tried to put together articles from the business brochures given to me by the advertisers that Diane Bougie had managed to convince. Mr. Péladeau came to my office, quite happy, and he wrote the titles with a red pencil between two meetings. Parlons Affaires was then distributed free of charge in the Laurentians and Laval regions. The only expense was the paper. The premises were inexpensive; he used the corner of his desk and the corner of mine. If he had claimed that Le

Journal de Montreal had been made from a kitchen table, his Business Talk was about office nooks.

We looked like a group of students doing some extracurricular activity between classes. I would take the experience with a grain of salt and tell myself that Let's Talk Business would turn off on its own after a few months, and finally, I could devote all my time to my usual tasks.

It was very bad knowing Pierre Péladeau. I really got to see this business artist at work with this PARLONS AFFAIRES fantasy. Obviously, he didn't have to support ordinary operating expenses, but the sales were producing amazing results. After the third issue, Mr. Péladeau's ambitions did not slow down; instead, he decided to hire a first salesperson for the advertisement. Marc Saint-Louis, a young lawyer, son of Judge Saint-Louis, and twin brother of Martine, was the lucky winner and the first official seller of PARLONS AFFAIRES.

Mr. Péladeau never had to go very far when he needed resources; there was always someone who knew someone around him.

"Mister P." continued to write the headlines and, for my part, in addition to listening to the content of the articles, I was promoted to columnist!

The newspaper was selling better and better. By the sixth month, sales had reached such a level that we could now hire a freelance journalist, as well as a second salesperson. As for me, I remained the columnist and the replacement journalist. Gradually, the usual staff on the 11th floor of 612 rue Saint-Jacques saw the offices invaded by previously unknown people who came to work for this unusual publication called PARLONS AFFAIRES. No one could believe their eyes. This small project started from scratch, had become an increasingly important employer. Mr. Péladeau regularly received phone calls from friends who sent him candidates who were looking for work and who were interested in Quebecor.

He would send them to PARLONS AFFAIRES and sell them. He was tireless. He would quote the adage many times: “If you want to help someone who is hungry, don’t give them a fish, teach them to fish instead! ”

Not only did his ambition grow when he saw his hobby grow, but he also communicated his enthusiasm to us. So much so that the PARLONS AFFAIRES employees became so numerous that they had to be accommodated in a space in another building located at 801 Sherbrooke Street.

You guessed it, the goal now was for the project to fly on its own. PARLONS AFFAIRES had to absorb all of its operating costs.

Most of the salespeople hired didn’t know anything about selling. They came from completely different sectors or had degrees in another field. Pierre Péladeau supervised them and instilled his knowledge into them. He paid them on commission. By applying the lessons of Mr. Péladeau, some have raised more than \$ 60,000 per year.

The team of advertising representatives led by Diane Bougie saw very dynamic people. I remember a few names: Rita Fortin, Daniel Blanchette, brother of Manon Blanchette, Martin Leduc, Carole Leblanc who is now a director at Auto Classic de Laval (Mercedes), Ginette Brault, Richard Marcil, Marie-Chantale Dion and a young man whom Mr. Péladeau loved very much and who had grown up near his home in Sainte-Adèle, Stéphane Mastreo Polo.

PARLONS AFFAIRES had grown into a small business within an empire.

On the death of Pierre Péladeau, in the wake of the restructuring that followed, Parlons Affaires was unfortunately to disappear. The great mentor was no longer there to watch over his creation.

But those who went through the PARLONS AFFAIRES school have benefited well from the experience. One of them, Stéphane Maestro, decided to relaunch the newspaper



abandoned by Quebecor and he created his monthly, *La Réussite*, inspired by Pierre Péladeau's formula.

*La Réussite* began operating in the summer of 1998 and has been published monthly since. It is distributed in Montreal and Quebec and has a circulation of over 35,000 copies. It can be obtained at newsstands or by subscription. Since a good habit is not easily lost, I have written, from the beginning, on page four, of the chronicle of the good news and social activities taking place in Montreal.

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**Pierre Péladeau - 1996**





**Robert Bourassa, Robert Maxwell and Charles Albert Poissant - Sainte-Adèle - 1991**

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**Home of Pierre Péladeau in Sainte-Adèle - 1996**

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## Chapter 8

### Pierre Péladeau and his women

In order to get an intimate portrait of Pierre Péladeau, it is practically essential to talk about the relationships he had with women. This is, of course, a sensitive subject because it touches more closely on the private life of my former boss. Her love life was part of the zone of self-protection that I had determined from the start and that I avoided crossing. It was all about the exchange of good manners between the boss and assistant. But you had to be blind not to see that he had a busy love life.

During a breakfast I was having with him, at his home in Sainte-Adèle, he indulged himself in talking to me about his vision of love.

He believed that it was impossible to spend his life with one and only one person.

He started by saying to me, “You have certain things to give to another, but you must also receive some. When you have nothing more to give or you don’t receive anything, it becomes pointless to continue the relationship. ”

He said that two beings who love each other must inevitably exchange equal amounts of love.

“As long as your partner gives you what you need and in return, you give the other what they need, we are in love. Otherwise, it’s over. It’s better to look elsewhere because one of the two will be unhappy. ”

He was convinced that couples who have been together for a long time no longer love each other. To him, love was like a fire that eventually goes out, a feeling that burns down. Then

you have to go to someone else to rekindle the flame, until next time.

Pierre Péladeau has known many women in his life, and from what I could see he had an admiration for women in general. His vision of women was universal. It is said that every human being always has a little of the opposite sex in him. It is certain that Pierre had a feminine side if only for his instinct, his taste for refinement and beauty.

Mr. Péladeau was very possessive of his wives. There were always a lot of women around him. He could not live without a female presence.

Among Quebecor's staff, Mr. Péladeau found it easier to establish a friendly relationship with a woman than with a man. I would say that his relationship with some female executives was almost a father-daughter relationship. He was becoming friends with them, and it was as if they were becoming his daughters. The company of women made him feel at ease. In contrast, he usually kept men at bay. He showed a sort of modesty when it came to feelings. He could have very intense business relationships with men, but they were never tinged with the intimacy he would have shared with women on the same issues. He kept his relationships with men, his executives for example, on a more professional than personal level. They worked together, had success in their respective fields, but it was very rare that he was really intimate with them. On the other hand, he could easily open his soul to his female staff.

Contrary to what has been said about him, he did not see the woman as an object. Rather, he saw her as a force of nature and a wealth in the universe. Pierre Péladeau's sexuality was not animal, it was intellectual. He always looked for some form of spirituality in his romantic relationships.

Mr. Péladeau had his own philosophy regarding the kind of relationship he had with women. He believed he was looking for his mother Elmire in all women. He spoke about it very often. Elmire had a strong personality and she was bossy. As



he was the youngest in the family, he grew up almost alone with her. His older siblings left home when he was still very young. Elmire devoted herself to her son Pierre, but she was cold and not very demonstrative, according to Mr. Péladeau. He said she had never hugged or kissed him, except five times on the forehead, and he had counted them. He had lacked maternal affection, still according to him. But, at the turn of the century, it was also not very common for a bourgeois family to openly show affection for children. Parent-child relationships were very austere. Most of the time, the children were closer to their nanny or guardian than to their parents. It was believed that the children would thus develop greater strength of character.

Like Henri, the father was already ruined when Pierre was born, the Péladeau family no longer had maids, drivers or butlers. Bourgeois education was however very present. When his father died, Pierre was only 10 years old. Elmire alone inherited the care of the family and the education of her seven children. She went out little, but she was very cultured. She liked to play cards with her friends, as long as she won. Mr. Péladeau said in his speeches, because he liked to quote it, that the stake of their parts of cards did not exceed 10 cents. But if she lost, she could be in a bad mood all week, until the next game where she was determined to make up for it. She was independent for her time; she smoked, took her little glass of gin every day, and loved chocolate.

Elmire was a former schoolteacher. She used to bang on her desk to be heard. She didn't accept being contradicted. She was very severe; to the point of traumatizing young Pierre. He hated her for a long time. She never folded. Proud, she did not accept defeat; she was playing to win. Pierre Péladeau has made it his motto.

As an adult, when he was just starting out in business and doing quite well, his mother idolized him. She took an interest in everything he did and gave him advice. Elmire always blamed her husband for not listening to her when he

embarked on a project that would ruin him in a matter of years. Even after his marriage, Mr. Péladeau visited his mother every evening, which was very rare among men in the 1950s. Mr. Péladeau often said that on many occasions, when he was in doubt or that he was distraught, he was going to see Elmire.

In an interview, a reporter asked him if his mother was the woman he had loved the most in his life, and he replied:

“ Without a doubt. And that’s why I’ve always had a hard time responding to love. I’ve been looking for my mother for a very long time, not to say that I’m still looking for her! Well, I look for it a little less, but I never found it. My mom was really amazing. I sat in front of her and she admired me. I saw it in his eyes, and I loved it! I could have said anything to her, she would have believed me! ”

From this, can we say that the nature of his relationship with women was based on his relationship with Elmire? He was advancing it himself. He also never hid his boundless admiration for her. He also confided that the only time in his life he cried was when his mother died.

He was looking for the ideal woman. His decision to marry Raymonde Chopin, his first wife, was taken quickly. He knew his father very well, who had also lent him the money to buy his first printing house with Paul Desormiers and Jean-Jacques Mercier, two other partners. Mr. Chopin decided to move to Europe, but he was worried about leaving his daughter alone.

Pierre Péladeau got on well with Raymonde Chopin. To reassure Mr. Chopin, Pierre proposed to Raymonde, three days’ notice, to marry her the day before her father’s departure. She accepted his request. On the morning of the ceremony, Mr. Péladeau went to the printing house and got down to work. He forgot the passing of time. The priest who blessed the union telephoned and shouted at him. Pierre Péladeau rushed towards the church and arrived 45 minutes late. Madame Chopin resented him for a long time. Several

years later, Mr. Péladeau learned that his father too had arrived 45 minutes late for his wedding. From the way Pierre Péladeau described his mother's character to us, one can assume that there must have been some sparks.

In one of his interviews, Pierre Péladeau confided that he was not really in love with his first wife. He felt good around her, but at that time he had only one thing in mind: to make money, a lot of money. Marriage was secondary. Ms. Chopin loved him. She has always had a great affection for him. She saw a bit of her father in him. Mr. Chopin was a doctor at Sainte-Justine Hospital. He had a stable work schedule; every night he was home at 5 o'clock. She believed that life with her new husband would be the same. Unfortunately, Pierre Péladeau was completely absorbed in his work. He left very early in the morning and only returned very late at night ... when he returned. It was the time when he was consuming more and more alcohol. He was losing track of time and reality. He often stayed in the office to sleep in order to finish a job.

When he quit drinking in 1974, he realized how miserable and lonely Mrs Chopin must have been. She became ill in the early 1960s with glaucoma. Doctors could not find any treatment to cure or even relieve it.

Still crumbling under the weight of work, Pierre Péladeau decided to have his wife treated in one of the best clinics in the world, in Switzerland. He was convinced that she would receive adequate care there and that she would be treated better. She died at the age of 47, in the absence of her family. It was a deep heartbreak that marked Mr. Péladeau for the rest of his life.

He once replied to a reporter: "I regret a lot of things. There are things in life that I wouldn't do again: alcohol first, with all that that entails. "

In the years following the death of his first wife, Pierre Péladeau did not change his working habits, but he became



sober. He did not take a drop of alcohol again until the end of his life.

In Pierre Péladeau's life, there were four categories of women: his "women-sisters"; his "women-daughters", his "loving women" and his "ex-loving women".

The "female sisters" were, so to speak, real sisters to him. There was no sexual or romantic aspect to their relationship. He had great respect for them and a lot of affection. He confided in them on all subjects, personal or professional. He had an exceptional bond with them. They only met in private, rarely in the office.

I can name a few that I have known as Gisèle Ducap, a neighbor he loved very much. When he was unwell, she would bring him soups. He entrusted him with the management of the Pavillon des Arts in Sainte-Adèle from the opening and for several years thereafter.

Solange Harvey, a columnist for the Journal de Montreal, now retired, was another of those precious friends. They had known each other for a long time. He had met her when she was going through a difficult time and they had helped each other. What started as a simple neighborhood turned into a great friendship. They exchanged about male-female relationships. Mrs. Harvey, who for years kept a heartfelt mail on the subject, could give her friend some wise advice. Mr. Péladeau didn't always agree with her, but once the debate was over, they became good friends again.

Pierre Péladeau believed in astrology and the esoteric sciences in general. He thus befriended a few astrologers including Jacqueline Aubry and Andrée d'Amour. He called them regularly to ask them whether or not it was a good day for important decisions. He was very superstitious. For him, the number 13 was a sign of luck. He had established his office on the 13th floor, and Fridays the 13th were auspicious days.

There was also Jacqueline Vézina whom Pierre Péladeau liked very much and with whom he exchanged confidences.

**Ms. Vézina had known Mr. Péladeau when he first started in business, and their friendship continued until his death.**

**In the second group, there were the women he considered to be his “wife-daughters”, usually employees in his service. He behaved with them as if he wanted to protect them from life; he cared for them, he wanted them to be good, to be their mentor. With these, too, there was no sexual or romantic aspect. It was more like he wanted to take them under his wing and teach them how to fly. Often, these women were part of its management staff. A few worked in other companies. He took their success to heart. Their respective ages varied between 25 and 50 years. He saw them as entrepreneurs and always pushed them to the top. Martine Saint-Louis is certainly the “girl-woman” in whom he had the most confidence.**

**He sometimes gave important responsibilities to his “wives-daughters” in the company. To give an example of the attachment that could be formed between them and him, Antoinette Noviello, a young lawyer and legal assistant at Quebecor, brought a rose to her desk, every day, from December 2 to 24. 1997.**

**In another group, quite apart, Pierre Péladeau jealously guarded his “loving women”. He had several relationships simultaneously because love did not exist according to his philosophy. There were “moments of love”.**

**He was in great demand and he chose the women with whom he wanted to share a little of his life. Strangely enough, even if each of them knew they didn’t have exclusivity, none would have given way.**

**Inevitably, the immediate staff were aware of his various connections. Women came to join the big boss in the office, or they accompanied him to concerts or special events. Over time we got to know them all, but we always tried to be very discreet.**

**He could have an intimate relationship with seven women simultaneously, dating each depending on the event or his**

mood. Each of the “loving women” had a different personality and he loved them for what made them different. These connections were not fleeting; some have lasted throughout my seven years of service.

There was continuity in his network of lovers. When one of them left him or he got bored, he found another to take his place. It was not competition. The bonds were established naturally after a meeting. If he liked the lady and they got along well, they would see each other again, and then she was part of his network. However, if he came back disappointed from a date, she wouldn’t hear from him again.

When one of his conquests wanted to end their affair and he didn’t agree, he latched on, exercising his flirtatious gifts. Sometimes the “woman-in-love” would give in and the relationship would resume for another end of way.

When he was in the company of a “woman in love,” he was only with her, devoting all his time to her, leaving aside business and worries. She became the center of the universe at the time of their meeting. The next day he would go back to his job or to another woman.

Most of the time, they retired to the privacy of his home in Sainte-Adèle, but he did not hesitate to appear publicly with the women he loved. Sometimes he was bold enough to invite two of them to the same party and introduce them to each other, without identifying them as his lovers. But they weren’t fooled. This daring gave rise to a few sparks. The next day he was trying to repair the damage.

Was he sexually active with all of them? They alone could answer you. Like a good chauvinist male, he pretended he was of a strong sexual constitution. Presumably at an advanced age, even though he retained his powers of seduction until the end, he was more physically calm, but frankly, I don’t know the answer.

Pierre Péladeau often said:

“A handsome man, like a beautiful woman, is sometimes lazy, while a man less blessed by nature will work twice as hard to



seduce a woman. Physical beauty is not the main criterion for pleasing women. ”

Mr. Péladeau was not attracted by the plastic beauty of a woman but by her charm, class, and intelligence. He was telling the story of a friend of his the same age as him who was dating a young girl, a supermodel.

He had said to her during a conversation, “You know she’s getting your money’s worth with you. ”

His friend then answered him just as spontaneously:

“Well, maybe she’s with me for my money, but I also have what I want from this relationship: her youth, her person, her liveliness. I spend money on her, but she gives me her presence and affection. What is wrong with that? We both benefit. ”

It has often been said that if Mr. Péladeau had not been rich, there never would have been so many women attracted to him. Personally, I believe that Pierre Péladeau was above all a seducer. He knew how to please, rich or not. If a woman wooed him for her money or to get gifts and favors, she was quickly disappointed. He knew it right away and he was rather parsimonious with luxurious gifts. But he did not neglect the quality of the time he spent with a lover.

I have known most of Pierre Péladeau’s “loving women” and they were generally wonderful women. To respect the privacy of these women, I will not mention any names.

Among the “loving women,” there were two sisters; one lived in Quebec, and the other in Montreal. Each knew the existence of the other’s relationship. One of them had a disabled son that she was raising on her own. Mr. Péladeau found in her generosity and courage in the face of life that comforted him and brought him happiness. She was a very beautiful woman and he was amazed at how she could manage to combine the devotion that the care of her child required with the fulfillment of her personal life.

The other sister was a very elegant bachelor. She had the class of his first wife. She had the same tastes. He shared

with her his love of beauty, music, and the arts. After a few years, one of the two sisters, the one who had a child, met another man whom she married, ending their relationship.

Each of his “loving women” had a particular character trait that attracted him especially. This was the case with the one I will nickname the “television director”, whose well-being and human warmth he appreciated. She brought him a lot of comfort.

Mr. Péladeau never spoke of his love affairs, but he sometimes called on our services, especially for transportation.

One weekday, he called me at 8 a.m. at the office:

“Monsieur Bernard, are you okay? I fired the driver last night. Would you come to get me? - No problem, Mr. Péladeau. Where are you at?

- At the Four Seasons. ”

If he was spending the night in town, he would rent a room in a big hotel, but he never took a cab; he found the taxi drivers’ cars dirty. He preferred to get into the car of Quebecor’s messenger.

Without asking any further questions, I jumped into my car and rushed to the Hotel Quatre Saisons, now called Hotel Omni, located on Sherbrooke Street.

I got to the hotel and looked for him at reception. He wasn’t there. I went to the concierge and asked for M. Péladeau. He replied that there was no guest listed by that name. I then checked with the name of the alleged lover, because I knew her. Nobody under this inscription either. Confused, I decided to go to the office, thinking he might have been there in the meantime. He wasn’t there.

Shortly after 9:15 a.m., he called me back to my office.

“ What are you doing? Is it going to be still long?

- But Mr. Péladeau, I’m coming from the hotel. You weren’t there. ”

It was not the Quatre Saisons hotel, but the Quatre-Saisons television station, located on rue Ogilvy at the time. When I

finally got to the door of the TV station, he was in the hall and had been waiting for me all this time: an hour and a half. He looked helpless, all alone in this vast deserted hall on a freezing Tuesday morning.

The director was a part of her life until the very end. She was at his bedside to watch over him while he lay in a deep coma at Hotel Dieu Hospital.

Pierre Péladeau also frequented the one who is nicknamed here “the editor”. She worked for a publishing house he coveted. He had met her during one of the conferences she had organized. His zest for life and his good humor had won him over. She was bubbly and had a knack for seeing the bright side of things. She was infectiously optimistic. When Mr. “P.” played the buffoon or blundered, she kept smiling. She always found a positive aspect in any situation, even the most difficult.

There was also “the doctor” whose presence and devotion he liked. She was also with him until the end.

“La Française” was much taller than him. He admired her class and her refinement. She often accompanied him to social evenings where protocol was in order. She was the only one who believed she had exclusivity. She has always ignored the existence of others. Mr. Péladeau was not sure whether she would accept his rule of conduct. But he had been frank with everyone else.

Another was “the accountant” who lived in Quebec. A very beautiful woman, simple at first, very down to earth. She cultivated the ambition to go into business and succeed.

As soon as a “woman in love” showed signs of greed or material interest, Mr. Péladeau would notice it immediately. He would then slip away and move on quickly. This was the case for a lady who worked in public relations. She often suggested expensive activities. The clumsiness of the latter was to ask Mr. Péladeau to take his private jet to go to New York for a weekend. He found an excuse to refuse because his New York was Sainte-Adèle. He walked a bit with her but

ended up walking away from it. She did not get through the three-month probation period ...

The essential principle, for me as for all the male staff in Pierre Péladeau's entourage, was never to be seduced by any of his "women-in-love". You had to be careful and never allow the slightest doubt or ambiguity to emerge. We were not to play in his flower beds.

When I arrived at Quebecor in 1991 I had just divorced. Mr. Péladeau, in a surge of generosity, felt concerned by my celibacy. It often happened that he wanted to introduce me to some of his acquaintances, those with which he was not intimately connected. Like a good father, he worried about seeing me alone. All the time, he would send me a "little piece of paper" inviting me to a party or an event, suggesting that there would be great company. I knew he was playing matchmaker. But love cannot be controlled.

Finally, the fourth category of women in Pierre Péladeau's life was his "ex-lovers".

Mr. Péladeau was initially very jealous of his regular relationships, but he was even more jealous and more possessive when a lover left him. He couldn't tolerate seeing an "ex" with a man, even if he was far from alone. To remain friends with an "ex", she had to remain single, as if to maintain the plan to resume the relationship if the flame was rekindled. Beautiful friendships were sometimes ruined because of his extreme possessiveness. For him, if another man took his place, it was tantamount to defeat. As much as he could be logical in business, he was irrational in love. But, as they say, may he who has never sinned cast the first stone.

The conclusion to remember about the women of Pierre Péladeau is that it was better to take it for granted: stay away from "women-lovers" or "ex-lovers" of "Mr. P."



**Many will be tempted to judge him and condemn his amorous behavior, but Pierre Péladeau had the great quality of living in the open. He felt like he was doing nothing wrong, and there was no need to hide anything.**

**His love life will have been like a canvas of a great master or a kingdom worthy of the Thousand and One Nights. Pierre Péladeau ruled two empires: that of love and that of business.**

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**Pierre Péladeau and an actress in Marilyn Monroe -  
Birthday, April 12, 1996**









## Chapter 9

### His artist friends and alcoholics

The best compliment ever addressed to Pierre Péladeau came from Patricia Pitchard. She describes him as “a business artist” in her book on business management techniques called: *Artists, Craftsmen, and Technocrats in Our Organizations*. The Toronto Stock Exchange economist handpicked a few businessmen from Saint John to Vancouver to try and paint a typical picture. In her study, she wanted to highlight the different management methods according to the temperaments and trends of business leaders in the country. She does not give the names of her models in her text, but she told Pierre Péladeau that he was one of the three finalists in her study. There was a craftsman, a technocrat, and the artist, it was him. She would have crowned him that he couldn't have been more flattered.

He had been all the happier because he had always worshiped artists. If he failed in this path, he surrounded himself with artists throughout his life. At one time when it was in fashion, he even operated two cabarets: *Le Baron*, located in Cartierville, his former neighborhood, and the Music Hall in Montreal that Raymond Lévesque had started. It was with the same impetus that he bought *Télévision Quatre-Saisons* 25 years later: he pursued the goal of being close to artists.

On the other hand, artists have benefited greatly from the contribution of Pierre Péladeau. It contributed, in several ways, through its magazines, its newspapers, and its patronage, to support cultural organizations. Not to mention



the work he provided at the same time to all the journalists, editors, and photographers working for one or the other of Quebecor's publications. While he financially helped promote local stars and a variety of artists, his idols were almost all from classical and intellectual backgrounds.

People were always surprised to know his tastes. For example, he had read all the great classics in literature. He boasted of having read all of Balzac. He himself had chosen the books that adorned the library in his office on the 13th floor.

He was often asked, in interviews, to name his favorite authors. Invariably, the list contained the following titles: *Les Nourritures Terrestres* and *Les Nouvelles Nourritures* by André Gide; *The True Riches* and *May my joy remain* by Jean Giono; *Useless Service* by Henri de Montherlant and *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho.

I have stopped calculating the number of times the mention of these few titles aroused astonishment. In his public life, Pierre Péladeau was sometimes very boorish, but in his private life, he only liked class and refinement. He could compete with the greatest in his culture. Many people knew of his immense negotiating skills and business acumen, but many never suspected that he was a scholar and appreciated such intellectual reading. He never cared much about it. He didn't like snobs, nor was he. It was quite paradoxical. Quebecor published horoscope books, and how-to guides on just about everything from car maintenance to dog training, but it was far from Mr. Péladeau's bedside reading. All the books in his libraries, whether in his office or in his residence, had not been placed there by chance or pretension. "Monsieur P." knew them.

I attended a performance by Raymond Devos on April 3, 1995, at Place des Arts, with Pierre Péladeau. By the end of the show, he was literally spellbound by the eloquence and subtlety of the French monologue. He loved stories, and he was carried away by the ones Mr. Devos could tell better than

anyone. Pierre Péladeau didn't like easy humor and vulgar jokes. Unfortunately, he found there were too many of them on our stages. He had enjoyed Devos so much that he would have liked to produce it at the Pavillon des Arts in Sainte-Adèle.

He had particular tastes. What he liked in a musical work or in a canvas was the finish, the polishing, as if he could read the artist's story, feel the hours of work, and the effort put in for the realization of the work.

He was not an amateur in contemporary art, even if Manon Blanchette, his ex-partner, tried to make him aware of it. On the other hand, he had confidence in the recommendations and in the judgment of the latter when the time came to make acquisitions for Quebecor or for its residence. Each time, he called on his know-how. However, he was always the one who decided which paintings and sculptures would be added to Quebecor's collection. He had an eye to judge them.

One has only to take a tour of his collection, which began in the 1980s, to realize its continued interest. When he died in 1997, he had invested more than a million dollars in paintings produced by renowned artists such as John Alius, Léon Bellefleur, Dominique Bois-Joli, Paul-Émile Borduas, Alexandre Calder, Stanley Cosgrove, Bruno Côté, Jean Dallaire, Litterio Del Signore, Rodolphe Duguay, Marcelle Ferron, Marc-Aurèle Fortin, René Gagnon, Marc Garneau, Helmut Grandsow, Normand Hudon, Catherine Henripin, AY Jackson, Denis Juneau, Jean-Pierre Lafrance, Pierrette Joly, Paul Lancz, Fernand Leduc, Jean-Paul Lemieux, Rita Letendre, Henri Masson, Richard Montpetit, Alfred Pellan, René Richard, Jean-Paul Riopelle, Goodridge Roberts, MA Suzor-Côté and Armand Vaillancourt.

Music was a real passion for Pierre Péladeau. He always worked while listening to a work by one of his favorite composers, whether he was in a company or not. It has even happened that journalists who came to conduct interviews have found it difficult to capture sound correctly with their

tape recorders. At the time of listening, the music was playing very loudly and predominantly on the tape, so that Mr. Péladeau could only be heard faintly. Journalists didn't always dare to tell him to turn the volume down. It was the same when he spoke on the phone.

He would also interrupt a conversation, in the middle of a meeting, to say:

“Shhh! Listen to this passage about how beautiful it is. ”

It was a passage he had certainly heard and enjoyed hundreds of times. A lady told me that one day, while she was telling him about her project in her Quebecor office, she noticed that he was staring at the ceiling. She thought he was carefully considering what she was explaining to him, but he was totally over the moon, hooked on his favorite clip. She had to restart her presentation, but she was having difficulty keeping her seriousness.

At the height of his alcohol addiction, he drank a lot in the company of artists. He didn't realize he was an alcoholic right away. At a pinch, he didn't give a damn as he was so taken up with his newspapers, his printing presses, and his obsession with growing his bank account. He also drank in the office. At the end of the day, when the job was done, he invited his employees over and emptied a bottle of scotch. Around 8 p.m., the group went to a restaurant and continued to drink. This little party never ended until the wee hours of the morning.

A person who drinks does so to escape reality. What reality was he fleeing? He had always had it hard on his heart since his studies. He had already started to drink seriously. He always remembered how difficult it was to be penniless when he was attending Brébeuf College. He had accumulated a lot of resentment.

His alcoholism followed the normal progression: more often and always more. The pretext is substantially the same for everyone: to relieve fatigue, take a little pick-me-up.



He has said many times in conferences: “Alcohol is the greatest depressant there is! The more we take, the more we get depressed. “If he had continued drinking, Quebecor certainly wouldn’t exist.

On his 49th birthday, in 1974, he celebrated a little more than usual. He meets with friends in a bar. The sauerkraut was generously drizzled with wine and Schnapps. Around 3 a.m., we had to leave because the restaurant was closing. One of his friends had already left. On the way out, he said to another friend who was accompanying him, “I’m going to drive, you’re too drunk,” not realizing he was too. The automobile fell into a ditch. Miraculously, they made it out unscathed, except for his partner’s broken nose.

The next day he decided it was too much. He knew that if he continued at this rate, he would end up in the cemetery or in jail. It wasn’t until a month later, however, that he attended a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, of which he said:

“AA could be defined as a meeting room and a coffee maker.” He was first blown away by the people he met there, people who helped each other, caring and caring for others; people like he’s never seen before.

But his decision was not yet completely made. He listened to the guy talking in front of the room and thought he was talking nonsense. In addition, he had given up a trip to Paris with a new girlfriend to end up in a church hall.

As he left the meeting, two men handed him a box of matches with their contact details and first name only: Guy and Albert. They emphasized to him as they left: “If you need us, call. ”

They were strange, these two men. Pierre Péladeau had never needed anyone. But they had intrigued him. He didn’t understand why they had offered to help him. Maybe borrow money from him or ask for a similar favor? Those who have heard it in the meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous know the following:

“I returned to the meeting. The man who shared his experience that evening was talking about his business. He

had made 100,000 dollars, lost 100,000 thousand, then won 200,000 thousand, and lost 300,000 thousand. I listened to him and thought to myself, this guy doesn't know anything about money. You can't do that with money. He's a liar. I went to the table at the back of the room and had a coffee. A guy standing there asked me what I thought of the testimony. I told him it was a bluff, that his story didn't hold water, and that he had bothered me. The other one said to me, "You might be right. But if he needs to talk about it, it makes him feel good. " I was struck by his words. It was a fact, the guy had no fault of me. I had no right to judge him. It wasn't my business. "

It was May 20, 1974, and Pierre Péladeau has never had a drop of alcohol since. He multiplied the AA meetings, and he kind of reconciled with God. Mr. Péladeau had always said, until then, that God was dead, like Nietzsche, his favorite philosopher of the time.

He explained: "The philosophy of AA reveals to us unsuspected spiritual strengths which then allow us to take charge of our lives. No scientific method of rehabilitation will ever replace human warmth and personal attention. I had tried everything in life. I had successful cars, houses, and businesses. And even plenty of women. I had been around the world several times. And yet, I was not happy because I didn't have any kind of spiritual life. When I entered the AA, I was not physically ill, but my soul was sick. I was full of aggression, resentment, resentment, empty of love. I have often told friends that they would learn more at an AA meeting than by reading all of Balzac and Dickens. Balzac has scrutinized the human soul, AA brings it to life. "

It was also in AA that he learned about helping, hence the generosity he acquired in later years.

He said in the same lecture: "We have to help each other, without asking about social, educational, cultural status, without questioning the diplomas of others. I have helped to find and maintain rehabilitation homes, both for alcoholics

and drug addicts. But more is needed. Perhaps the governments could force the alcohol industry to finance these houses. The pharmaceutical industry must also distribute part of its profits to fight drug addiction. We should demand that the government require alcohol companies to state on their labels that the use of their product can cause death, as is required for cigarette packages. Quite a few more people die from alcohol than from smoking, it seems easy to see. ”

“Mr. P.” was anxious to write his speeches on alcoholism himself, and he put a lot of attention and heart into it. His descriptions reflected, he said, perfectly what alcoholism meant in everyday life.

Mr. Péladeau said: “We have to realize that however great our efforts to correct the situation are, we are only addressing the ‘effects’ of these diseases. There remains the problem of the cause, the root of all these evils. Our efforts must also focus on prevention, and above all on education. There is no quick fix, and no cure has yet been found. Addiction to drugs in all its forms, drugs, alcohol, cocaine, heroin, and even cigarettes, is based on a common denominator: wanting to flee reality and also, often, a deep lack of love and acceptance. others. Not being able to live, support, and endure reality.

There is cause and effect, drug use results in a deep sense of guilt. In turn, guilt leads to insecurity and the demeaning of the person with all the fears that this downfall brings, to the aggressiveness responsible for the outburst of violence.

We must help those who are affected by these problems to take charge of themselves, to value themselves, to turn the page on the past, to find joy through the love of one another to finally lead to the discovery of a being. supreme. ”

Personally, I did not understand very well how this fraternity which unites alcoholics or people struggling with drug addiction functions. It was explained to me that you had to have been through this hell to understand. Since I did not

suffer from this disease of alcoholism, I was a bit unknown, but Pierre Péladeau never asked me to participate in AA work. He did it alone, without talking about it or bothering Quebecor employees or his friends who didn't have this problem.

After I left Quebecor, I learned that Mr. Péladeau had helped countless numbers of former alcoholics. If there were any at 612 rue Saint-Jacques Ouest, I never noticed them. But Mr. Péladeau told me, however, that he had helped many of those who clink glasses with him at the start of the Journal de Montreal. Many, like him, have spoken about it publicly in order to set an example, to show that we can get out of it, provided we really want to. Those who asked for help from Pierre Péladeau received it. It was automatic.

On the other hand, when he received at his residence or even on the occasion of his annual festivals, he neglected nothing. There was plenty to drink for everyone. He said it wasn't because he couldn't drink that he

had to deprive others of it. He did, however, have an eye for spotting those of his guests who had "sickness of the soul." He never told them about it, but he always inquired about what was happening to them, to let them know he was there for them, anytime. And it was true.

I often got calls from people who didn't know him very well, but who had heard about his past and his dedication to the cause of alcoholics. There were almost inconceivable situations where families were going through real ordeals caused by the alcoholism of one or more parents.

Mr. Péladeau responded to these calls. He listened to their story and in almost all cases he organized his rescue group very quickly. But he was so quiet about these people that most of the time I didn't know their names or what had happened to them. I only know that this has happened dozens of times.

However, I did witness a rescue. He was an artist, well-known and much loved by the public. He was very successful in his



career. Then, after a year, he was barely working or not at all. He lost all his contracts. Used to leading a great lifestyle, he quickly found himself without money. But he still had some to drink. He was married and the father of two very charming children. His wife had never let it be known about the problems the family was going through. In public, they looked happy and united. But Mr. Péladeau immediately guessed the situation.

The woman called in tears on a Thursday afternoon. They were on the streets. They no longer had a car, no more furniture. Everything had been seized. He had gone to live with friends, and she, elsewhere with the two children, penniless. But he continued to drink, without stopping. She loved her husband and was not able to leave him. For her, and for Mr. Péladeau, he would most certainly die.

Pierre Péladeau consoled the lady by telling her:

“Don’t worry, I’ll take care of everything. Stop crying now. Get your things ready, I’ll send you the driver tomorrow at noon. You come to my place in Sainte-Adèle. ”

He kept his promise. The next day, her driver picked up the mother and her two children. Mr. Péladeau also communicated with the husband to ask him to come to his place for the weekend but without further explanation.

Happy to take advantage of Mr. Péladeau’s hospitality, and especially his bar, the husband immediately agreed. They spent the weekend together, and Mr. Péladeau said nothing about his artist friend’s problem. The latter was celebrating and continued to talk about his career as if he was having a hard time, and that he was going to make a financial recovery.

Pierre Péladeau knew the story by heart as if he had written it. He had been there too. On Sunday evening, the artist packed his things to return to town. While at the door, Mr. Péladeau took his suitcase and said to him:

“You come with me. ”

His wife told me that a miracle had happened or that it was a divine intervention. She had tried for years to convince her husband to quit drinking, herself, and all of the couple's friends, but it was like talking to a wall.

In front of Pierre Péladeau, he had neither grumbled nor argued. He didn't say a word, and he followed her like someone who just got caught stealing. Mr. Péladeau had him driven to the house in Ivry-sur-le-Lac and he personally saw that he underwent a closed cure for 15 days. He hosted the wife and children for

all this time to allow them to rest and to prepare them for the "after-brush".

"Mr. P." also remembered the adjustment to life without alcohol. It was heavy on his heart in 1974 when he sobered up. He understood how much he had lost to the damn drink, and that he would never get back, in business, in friendship, and above all, in love.

"The hardest part was recognizing the harm I had caused several people through the nonsense and bullshit I did. I could have done without it, and so did these people! If I had to do it again, I wouldn't be going this route. But I can't start over, and you have to learn to live with it. "

I understood by reading the texts of Pierre Péladeau, after his death, and by talking with people who had gone through the same hell, how much one can be skinned by long years of drunkenness. Reactions, feelings, and frustrations are often the same, with less drunkenness. Almost everything takes on proportions tenfold with alcohol. We become angry over nothing, we are sensitive, and we do not control our feelings. I then understood why "Monsieur P." was so sensitive and on edge, hence his antennae and his generosity. He was whole, never half-hearted.

The last fundraising activity to help alcoholics attended by Pierre Péladeau was the annual Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac evening presented at the Sheraton in Laval on November 28, 1997. He suffered his stroke four days later.

**When he was in his twenties, Pierre Péladeau said that God was dead. At the end of his life, in all sobriety, he said that when he quit drinking, it was the devil who died.**

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**Pierre Péladeau, Carole Gagné of National Bank and Bernard Bujold**



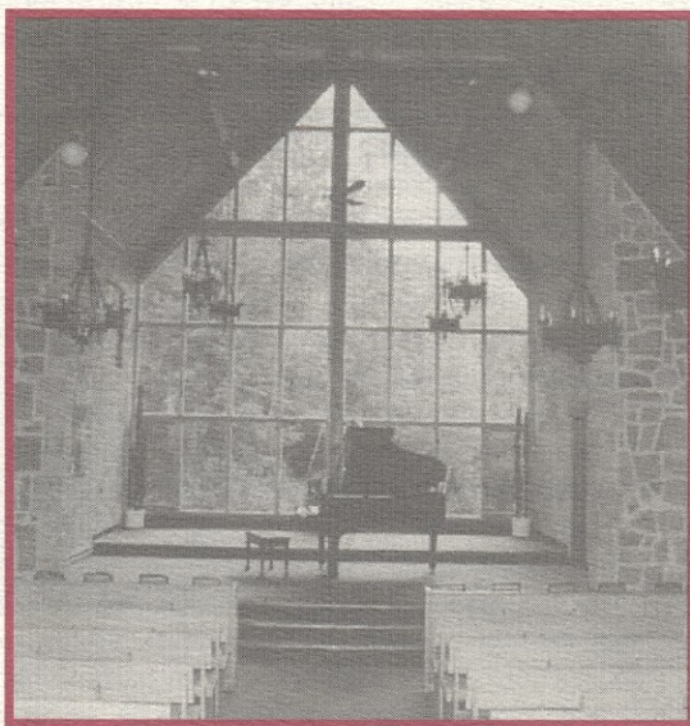


**Armand Vaillancourt and Bernard Bujold - 1996**



**Guests at Pavillon des Arts of Ste-Adèle -  
Manon Blanchette, Marie Laframboise, Père Marcel de La Sablonnière,  
Carole Gagné and Bernard Bujold -1996**

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**Tél.: (514) 229-2586**





**Pierre Péladeau, André Bérard, Réjean Tremblay and Fabienne Larouche - 1995**





**Garden party at the Ste-Adèle residence -1995**



## Chapter 10

### Power and society

Power can take many forms, but a person's power over a group is often governed by unwritten laws. A character is more respected than another because he is a model by his actions, he inspires motivation or fear, or quite simply because he wants to impose himself and that he monopolizes power in all kinds of ways.

The film *The Godfather*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola, based on the work of Mario Puzo, is an excellent illustration of power. In this film, Don Corleone rules over an empire and the surrounding community, surrounded by his two sons, Sonny and Michael, as well as lawyer Tom, his consigliere. The Godfather runs a large business enterprise, but he also imposes his power in all spheres of society.

Don Corleone is the man everyone comes to ask for help and assistance. He never disappoints them. He never makes empty promises, he is effective. He doesn't have to be your friend to help you, but you have to be his. Corleone doesn't ask for anything in return for his services, but you know that sooner or later he can call on you and you will have to return the lift.

Pierre Péladeau, like many other leaders in our society, was a kind of "godfather", less crime. In fact, I once mentioned to Mr. Péladeau that he reminded me of Don Corleone. He laughed and told me I was right. Power is something of a mystery, but as Al Pacino says in the film, power is never given, you have to take it. Péladeau agreed with this interpretation.

**Pierre Péladeau knew how to seize power and he encouraged those around him to do the same. It is a great talent to know how to impose oneself on others and the people who possess it are generally the leaders of our society, whether it is to do good or bad.**

**Mr. Péladeau had a heart, as was the character played by Marlon Brando. He knew how to make himself respected, he was feared, and, above all, he should not be attacked unfairly, because he knew how to defend himself. Reality sometimes goes beyond fiction, and The Godfather could have been the story of Pierre Péladeau.**

**Pierre Péladeau had built a very impressive social network around Quebecor. If he needed service, he knew who to turn to and who he could count on.**

**I have personally witnessed the extent of Mr. Péladeau's power and influence over society when selecting guests for the dinners he hosted in Sainte-Adèle, ahead of the weekly concerts at the Pavillon des Arts. The idea came to him in early 1995, after being invited to a similar event at his neighbor André Bérard's. The latter received personalities from various backgrounds every Saturday at his second home in Lac Masson. Péladeau thought it might be interesting to do the same at home. He asked me to come up with some sort of script of how the evening would unfold and invite the personalities whose names appeared on a list he had made.**

**These dinners allowed me to interact with influential people and see the kind of relationship that Mr. Péladeau had with them.**

**At first, these dinners were held almost every weekend. Mr. Péladeau chose the menus with the caterer and set up the seating plan. Meals, which always included five courses, were accompanied by selected wines.**

**sis by the host itself. To soften the mores, he also insisted on the presence of a chamber orchestra.**

**As it should, he offered helicopter transportation to all his guests. In fact, he hoped to walk them around in his device, because he wanted to share that pleasure with the people he loved. Usually, a photo was taken of the guests that was published in Le Journal de Montréal on Monday mornings.**

**All of Quebec's financial power and elite were received at his residence in Sainte-Adèle. After dinner, he passed by the Arts Pavilion to attend a classical music concert.**

**He himself chose his guests, always four couples, varying the themes and characters. To be on that list, you still had to meet a few criteria, including at least being Pierre Péladeau's friend. The guests were usually people he knew but didn't necessarily know each other. So he had to create a dynamic.**

**These dinners were friendly. People were very happy to be invited. Many also discovered the charming side of Pierre Péladeau during these meals.**

**He has already invited Réjean Tremblay and Fabienne Larouche, at a time when they were living together. "Mr. P." was looking forward to meeting Ms. Larouche. Réjean Tremblay showed up, but without Fabienne who was held back by a health problem. Mr. Péladeau was disappointed. He liked Réjean, but he found Fabienne much prettier. He had offered the position of editor of the Journal de Montréal to Mr. Tremblay in the past, but the two men had not been able to agree on compensation.**

**Among the other invited personalities, related to the media world, there was also Simon Durivage, always very kind and very respectful. He had done a television retrospective on Mr. Péladeau's student life some time ago. The latter had at once loved him for his spontaneity and simplicity.**

**Gilles Proulx pleased the great boss of Quebecor for his fervor, and he was also invited. The colorful journalist was also a close friend of Ben Weider, a renowned bodybuilder. Pierre Péladeau respected Mr. Weider and he knew how to recognize the immense success of this businessman. He had known him at the center of Father Marcel de La Sablonnière,**



to whom Ben Weider contributed greatly by providing sports equipment and accessories. Peladeau knew I was working out in a gym with weights. Also, when Ben Weider hosted a reception for Mr. Proulx's birthday on April 5, 1997, to which he had invited Mr. Péladeau, he sent me the invitation. A scheduling conflict prevented Mr. Péladeau from attending, and I had been delegated in his place to represent him. Poor Mr. Weider was very sad and disappointed to see me arrive alone, without Mr. Peladeau. He, however, warmly welcomed me to his residence and showed me, as to the other guests, his immense collection of historical recollections concerning Napoleon. Mr. Ben Weider and I kept in touch afterward, and I have a lot of respect for this great Quebecker.

Judge Andrée Ruffo also took part in one of these meals. Mr. Péladeau has always supported her. He found that she was doing a valuable job for the youth and he had encouraged her in setting up her foundation. Unfortunately, he couldn't take as much of an active part as he would have liked: with all his activities and work, he ended up running out of time. He admired Judge Ruffo for her boldness, especially when she braved political righteousness, and for her willingness to help needy children and teens.

One evening, Mr. Péladeau invited Jean-Luc Mongrain, Stéphane Bureau, Denise Bombardier, and the Ambassador of France, Alfred Siefer Gaillardin, to be placed side by side in his plan. He was salivating at the thought of the conversation they would exchange. Helicopter or not, sometimes the weather would cut short his plans. There was a violent storm during the day, and only Stéphane Bureau and the ambassador made it to Sainte-Adèle.

Professionals in the publishing community believed that Pierre Péladeau and Claude Charron, a former owner of Trustar, hated each other. Quite the contrary. They were in regular communication and they had worked together. Claude Charron, who was invited to one of the dinners, is the only person in Quebec to have sold the same magazine

twice. Exceptional! The first time, Le Lundi, founded by Mr. Charron in 1976, was sold when he was leaving Québec Mag Publishing in 1984. Five years later, at the end of 1989, he complied with the terms of an agreement. of non-competition, Mr. Charron founded Trustar and implemented the new 7 Days magazine with immense success. In 1992, Quebecor, owner of Publicor and Le Lundi magazine, had to resell that publication to Trustar because it couldn't be made profitable. Eventually, Le Lundi became Quebecor's property again, when TVA Publications acquired it in mid-2000.

In my opinion, Claude Charron and Pierre Péladeau were the largest magazine publishers in Quebec. They have managed to put together interesting publications and captivate readers.

Pierre Maisonneuve was also a guest at the "Monsieur P." dinners. He conducted a first interview on October 25, 1995 on the subject of the referendum. The second interview, in August 1997, presented to Radio-Canada and subsequently published, is without a doubt one of the best ever by a journalist on the man and the character. This journalist had prepared his interview with great care and respect. I must admit that never before has Pierre Péladeau given himself up to a journalist as he did with Mr. Maisonneuve. He revealed confidences to her that I had never heard before, with genuine candor and candor.

Pierre Péladeau also invited Marcel Béliveau to his table. The latter had also played a trick on him in his famous series Surprise sur prize. We will remember the scene of the fictitious toll station where Mr. Péladeau is stopped in his Mercedes, and where he is asked for an excessively high right of way. Of course, "Mr. P." opposes it in the colorful way we know him. When the scene ends, to Mr. Péladeau's great relief, we see Marcel Béliveau, proud of his success, go to greet his victim. But a victim with a good memory and more than one trick up his sleeve. A few months later, the creator of Surprise Surprise asked for a meeting with his friend and

big boss of Quebecor. Marcel Béliveau had designed a new television project and he was looking for a prestigious sponsorship. He was received on the 13th floor with all the usual respect. Pierre Péladeau listened to him for an hour presenting the project in question and asking him questions, each more difficult and more annoying than the next. In the end, Mr. Péladeau got on his high horse and began to insult his interlocutor about the poor quality of his new product, how he could waste his precious time listening to trivia, and so on. Poor Marcel Béliveau was very uneasy. All he wanted at that point was to get out of that office in fourth gear. Seeing that he was finishing it off, Pierre Péladeau burst into a thunderous laugh, telling his sweaty guest that it was just a joke. He was now satisfied with his revenge for the toll story. History does not say whether Mr. Béliveau obtained his sponsorship. I was not there to watch the scene; it was told to me.

Many other artists were also invited to Pierre Péladeau's house. He really liked Danielle Ouimet. We went, Mr. Péladeau and I, to Quebec a few times to take part in his program Bla bla bla. I had the opportunity to witness the former film actress's talent as a host. Certainly, if Mr. Péladeau had lived he would have liked to have had him on a rush-hour show on TQS.

Among the other artists or writers who were received at the residence of Mr. Péladeau in Sainte-Adèle, we retain the names of: Gaston L'Heureux, Serge Turgeon, Jean-Pierre Ferland, whose song he considered Envoyé à Maison as her favorite, Renée Martel, Arlette Cousture, Pierre Vadeboncœur, Louis Lalande, Monique Lepage, Louise Dussault, Andrée D'Amour, Andrée Champagne, the first Donald, Charles Tisseyre, Marguerite Blais, Michel Forget, Louise Deschâtelet, Pierre Marcotte, the couturier Jean-Claude Poitras and Agnès Grossmann, conductor of the Orchestre métropolitain.

Among the guests from the business world, André Chagnon, the founder of Videotron, was one of the first. Although the



two men respected each other, they didn't see each other much. Mr. Chagnon was virtually the opposite of Mr. Péladeau in his private life. He was always a one-woman man, he never drank alcohol, and he was very reserved, even shy.

Shortly after Quebecor's acquisition of TQS, TQS management began recruiting TVA staff. Mr. Chagnon did not like the tactic, and he sent the message that TQS should build its own network without resorting to TVA staff. Presumably, if Mr. Péladeau had lived through the early years of TQS operations, he would have crossed swords with Mr. Chagnon at some point.

At the same table as Mr. Chagnon, Pierre Péladeau had also invited André Bérard, of the National Bank, Claude Charron, and Bernard Landry who was then Deputy Prime Minister in the government of Lucien Bouchard.

It was on this occasion that I was able to discover the integrity of Bernard Landry. Not only had he categorically refused the offer of helicopter transportation, but he wanted everyone in his cabinet to do the same. For him, there was no question of taking advantage of a service, however simple it might be, in order to avoid any form of conflict, whether present or future.

Bernard Landry told me: "We have the means to transport our ministers and I do not want any doubt to be raised about your invitation. I'm going to dine with Mr. Pierre Péladeau but with our car. "

Pauline Marois also joined on one occasion, as did Louise Beaudoin. The latter did not know Pierre Péladeau personally, but he valued the work she devoted to sovereignty and the passion she had for it. Among the other politicians invited, Mr. Péladeau also invited Serge Ménard to the same table as Gérald Larose. This series of guests gave rise to lively conversations, but were always cordial, and above all very interesting.

In terms of business and politics, we notice all the big names in Quebec among the guests of Pierre Péladeau in Sainte-Adèle: Drs Réjean Thomas and Yves Lamontagne, ministers Louise Harel, Rita Dionne-Marsolais and David Cliche, the mayors Gilles Vaillancourt, of Laval, and Pierre Grignon, of Sainte-Adèle, the trade unionist Monique Simard, Jean-Claude Scraire of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, Pierre Laurin, the judges Pierrette Rayle and the great friend of Pierre Péladeau, Bruno Cyr, Corinne Côté-Lévesque, wife of René Lévesque, lawyers Dominique Charron and Colin A. Gravenor, partner of M. Péladeau in the Pavillon des Arts, and Suzanne Anfousse, his personal lawyer during his last years.

Dinners ceased in the early summer of 1997. As the Sainte-Adèle residence was not air-conditioned, meals became uncomfortable during the hot summer months. The activity was normally scheduled to resume in the fall of 1997, but one obligation to another, Mr. Péladeau was never made available and no other dinner was organized before his death.

When you are a character of Pierre Péladeau's caliber, you become a center of attraction. In Quebec, everyone knew him. He was called back when he left messages. He could talk to whomever he wanted. He had also developed a very enviable network of resource people in all sectors of activity, industrial, political, social, and, of course, artistic.

Mr. Péladeau loved young people and he never missed an opportunity to encourage them, to push them to think big, to dare, to always go further. We were in Rivière-du-Loup on November 3, 1994, for a conference that Mr. Péladeau was to give at a school. There he met Mario Dumont, leader of the Democratic Action. He had found him very energetic and very young to be so active in politics.

"He has good ideas, the youngster," he said afterward. He has potential. He will certainly go far. "

They had just shook hands and exchanged a few words. But that was enough for Pierre Péladeau to get an idea.

Faced with Quebec and Canadian society, Pierre Péladeau wanted to be respected and considered in the same way as his colleagues of the same status. He liked Quebecor's fame beyond the borders of Quebec. At the start of his career, unlike Conrad Black, whom he often cited, Pierre Péladeau aimed for provincial territory, but once he had conquered it, he set his sights on further.

It must be said that each time he suffered a setback in his acquisitions or financial operations, he had gotten into the habit of going elsewhere, outside of Quebec. This was the case with the Quebecor stock exchange listing. No one on Saint-Jacques Street wanted to give him the price he was asking for the shares. He turned to New York and got what he wanted. It was the same with the failure of the Toronto Sun. Quebecor had money to invest, we didn't want it in Ontario, so he went to invest it in France. These steps opened his mind and pushed his interest in international markets.

This need to be recognized was again demonstrated to me at the 1996 Quebec Economic Summit. Pierre Péladeau was happy to have been invited and to participate.

On March 19, 1996, the trip had started well and he was very cheerful. The day before his presentation, after the hearings of the first day, we retired to our respective rooms. He then noticed that the maid's cart was in the hallway near her door. Seeing the cart, he nudged me, pointing in his direction.

"Come on," he insisted, "we'll go get some soaps. It's going to be good for my collection. "

He had gotten into the habit of collecting soaps from every hotel he stayed in. In the end, he must have had hundreds. It amused him. I will always keep this image of him with his pockets full of little soap, especially as he was preparing to give a serious talk on the recovery of the Quebec economy.

He prepared his speech by emphasizing Quebecor's contribution to the economy as a job creator and how to generate profits. It was always the same theme, but he kept repeating them. It was important to him. Everyone from

finance and industry was represented around a huge table. Employers, unions, students, and private and public organizations all had their delegates there. Private companies were represented by their respective chairman.

Under the responsibility of Prime Minister Lucien Bouchard, the summit was chaired by Claude Béland, former president of the Desjardins Group. He acted as a facilitator and had to coordinate the interventions of each of the participants, over a hundred.

Only five minutes were allotted for each presentation, not a second longer.

When Pierre Péladeau spoke, he didn't realize how quickly the minutes flew by. When Mr. Béland gave him the countdown for the last 60 seconds, Mr. Péladeau exclaimed:

"But I'm not done talking. "

Not only did he have to stick to the schedule, but he was outraged to have the same deadline for his presentation as a student who did not even have his diploma in hand, he who had an empire of more than two. billion. He knew it before he started, but he only really understood it at the last minute. He came away frustrated, especially considering that the student had been talking nonsense. After this exercise, it became obvious to everyone that Pierre Péladeau would never have succeeded in active politics. He was suffocating if he had to work under duress.

But he was not at the end of his frustration. Mr. Péladeau wanted Quebecor to be given the recognition it deserved. When it was not considered, as was the case at the Economic Summit, he felt rejected, and therefore Quebecor as a whole.

At the very end of the Quebec City Summit, following discussions, it was concluded that it was impossible to reach a comprehensive solution for the economy. It was decided to fragment the efforts and create sectoral committees. The chairmen of each of these committees had been chosen and appointed by the Prime Minister; they were not elected by the participants. These committees were supposed to continue



the work following the symposium. The nomination process was unclear. On the other hand, what was clear for Pierre Péladeau was that the committee directors had been called in camera to obtain their agreement to their appointment, but not him.

You would have slapped him in the face and he would have had the same reaction. He wasn't speaking, but it was obvious he was angry. During the break, immediately after the announcement disclosing the names of the committee heads, Pierre Péladeau stood up and said:

“ We're going.

- But Mr. Péladeau, the closing ceremony is in an hour, I said, realizing that something did not please him.

“We're off the same,” he added simply, without more.

I had seen him, many times throughout my tenure, get up and leave a meeting. I knew he was trying to contain his anger, but in the case of the Summit, he also felt grief.

He never mentioned it, and I never dared to ask him questions about it. Subsequently, if I mentioned Lucien Bouchard for any event or occasion, the answer was brief but very eloquent:

“Let it be, he punctuated. Is there anything else? ”

It was not until the Saguenay floods in July 1996 that the two men regained contact. \*\* \*

Pierre Péladeau did not take vacations often and did not have a lot of free time. He would indulge himself in his moments of relaxation at Sainte-Adèle by the pool or while walking in his garden and in the neighboring forest.

He also liked to go fishing, not to fish, but to relax, read a little and enjoy nature. I accompanied him on a few fishing trips to the Donohue factory camp located near Lake Boileau in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region. True to his habits, he always invited close friends with whom he wanted to spend some time.

It was still funny because he never went fishing. I never saw him hold a fishing rod, or even accompany others in the boat.

He said he went fishing, but he stayed on the dock and just watched the others have fun playing the sport. He also took great pleasure during the meals organized by the cook of the fishing club to discuss with his guests, to enjoy the fish caught by others. These meals were arguably as captivating as the fishing activity itself, as the discussions were intimate and took place in a friendly atmosphere. Mr. Péladeau liked to invite and receive his closest friends to this camp, and he sometimes tried to take the opportunity to settle business cases, as was the case with Yves Moquin.

In 1989, when Éditions Le Nordet, owned by Quebecor, and Éditions Transmo Inc., owned by Yves Moquin, merged, a dispute arose over the settlement of the transaction.

Pierre Péladeau was very fond of Yves Moquin, whom he had known from his very beginnings. Mr. Moquin was one of the first lawyers in 1972 in the legal department at Quebecor's head office. This service was created on the occasion of Quebecor's first public share issue. Yves Moquin worked at Quebecor until 1979, when he decided to found his own company, Éditions Transmo Inc. In May 1989, he merged his firm with Quebecor and Le Nordet editions, thus creating Publicor. Mr. Moquin was to remain in office until 1992, the date agreed for the final payment of the transaction. The value of the magazine market had, however, fallen between 1989 and 1992 and Mr. Péladeau wanted to pay a discount for the transaction, which Mr. Moquin contested. The two respected and liked each other, which did not prevent disagreement over the financial settlement of the case.

The day before leaving for a fishing trip, scheduled for September 1, 1995, Pierre Péladeau bumped into Yves Moquin in a restaurant and said:

“Yves, we have to fix this. ”

They argued for a while and I couldn't say if “Mr. P.” had it in mind to settle the conflict at his chalet, but he still invited Mr. Moquin to join the group.

To his surprise, M. Moquin accepted. When we got to the chalet, Mr. Péladeau was happy to have gathered all his people. However, when the time came to allocate the rooms, he realized that there were too many people for the number of rooms available. And so I was forced to sleep in the fishing guide's hut ...

The trip, however, was not enough to coax Mr. Moquin into settling their deal.

Finally, at the end of 1996, Quebecor paid the full amount according to the original agreement with Yves Moquin, including interest and legal fees. This was a transaction of over \$ 20 million.

Yves Moquin was one of the few who won his dispute with Pierre Péladeau by standing up to him and who remained his friend until the end.

At the time of settlement, Mr. Péladeau would have even said: "Bah! I am very happy for him. "

Pierre Péladeau had relationships and exchanges with people from all walks of life. Sometimes he fought mercilessly and fiercely defended himself to win at any cost, often leaving a bitter taste in the loser's. However, he said that if you always have to win, you also have to leave a little on the table; never leave with all the loot.

Sometimes he also fought for the sheer pleasure of playing and pushing the other to his limits, like two boxer friends training together. The fight against Yves Moquin was a kind of training that Pierre Péladeau held with his former employee and friend. He knew he was stronger with his Quebecor empire, but he fought honestly and the best won the battle of the day.

However, Pierre Péladeau wanted to win the war, and he continued his daily battles elsewhere and with other adversaries.

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**Pierre Péladeau - 1996**





**Members of Pierre Péladeau's cabinet team.  
Standing: André Gourd, Pierre Péladeau, Martine Bérubé, Bernard Bujold;  
Seated: Sylvie Cordeau, Micheline Bourget and Nicole Germain - 1996**





**Pierre Péladeau in discussion with Lucien Bouchard - Saguenay flood - July 1996**





**Donohue -Fishing Camp 1996**





**Hélicoptère de Québecor Modél Bell 206B - 1995**

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## Chapter 11

### Donation stories

It was well known that Pierre Péladeau managed his businesses sparingly. He had a reputation for being close to his pennies. He also didn't hide to say that when he did his groceries he wanted to have carefully cut coupons on hand. However, when it came to making a donation or helping a friend or even someone recommended by a friend, he could have a check written as soon as his decision was made, and sometimes in the very minute.

I had believed, before entering his service in 1991, that the donations distributed by Quebecor to various charities and non-profit organizations were administered by a committee; that several people from the company were responsible for analyzing the requests, and that this committee, subsequently and with the agreement of the president, proceeded to hand over the donations.

It was absolutely not the case. Before I started working with him, Mr. Péladeau made a lot of donations, mostly very discreet. Few people knew about it. The amounts could range from the cost of a simple grocery bill to tens of thousands of dollars. He often acted spontaneously and secretly. But after many years, the demands started to increase, coming from all kinds of groups and people. I would say that in the end, I could get up to ten requests per day, and I only count those that reached my desk. As soon as we gave money to a group, it was assured, others would come to us to get if not the same amount at least a contribution. There had to be some form of surveillance.

For Quebecor, the donations were managed by one person. Mr. Péladeau could well claim that there was a committee that decided, it was only one person: himself.

He had been made aware of philanthropy and sharing by his friend Father Marcel de La Sablonnière. The Center Immaculée-Conception was located, at the time, directly in front of its office on Papineau Street.

The Center was founded in September 1951, and today it bears the name of Center Marcel-De-La-Sablonnière. Mr. Péladeau contributed a lot to the works of Father Sablon. I had the opportunity to meet this man of great generosity. He died on December 20, 1999.

Another fact that marked Pierre Péladeau for life concerning sharing with the less well-off was the death of his father. Even though he had only vague memories of himself, as he has recounted many times in public, he remembered the day of Henri Péladeau's funeral. Before Peter was born, when the business was booming for the family, his father had helped many people around him and throughout the neighborhood. Friends and families in need had benefited from his generosity when they found themselves in financial difficulty. Henri had his heart on his sleeve. When he died, he was ruined. There weren't even ten people at his funeral. No one remembered how ever he hesitated to hand out the contents of his chests when they were full.

Pierre Péladeau has never forgotten this day marked by people's ingratitude.

From the very beginning of his participation in "his works," as he called them, he had determined the precise niche he preferred. Each company chose its areas of charitable activity. At Videotron, for example, we were very involved in sports competitions with prestigious sponsorships. For Mr. Péladeau, even though the sport was one of the Journal de Montreal's best-selling items, he was not interested in it when the time came to make his choices. "His works" were the artists, the music, and the people with alcohol problems.

For any philanthropic organization, making sure that the recipients put the money received well was the most difficult part to manage. In this regard, Pierre Péladeau excelled.

Erik Péladeau wanted a formal structure for managing contributions, but his father didn't think it was a good idea. In fact, we had already tried the committee method when I first worked on Quebecor's 1991 annual report. We brought together several people at different levels, including those of accounting, the legal secretariat, and the graphic design firm Vasco Design. In the end, we presented him with the consensus product of the committee. He didn't like the result. He gave me a photograph of the facade of the building on Rue Saint-Jacques and told me that was what he wanted to see on the cover. It was a beautiful photograph of the building, but it had been taken by an amateur. It was necessary to have it corrected in imagery. Even after a month of work, he found this photograph to be more representative of what Quebecor was like than any of the others we had offered him. He liked simple people and simple things. I understood that simplicity should also dominate when it comes to getting involved in the community.

So I received the requests. I accumulated them and sent them to him once a month with my recommendations for him to study. I had to do a first elimination. Most of the time I knew that certain requests, especially in theater and sports, would not interest him, so I put them aside and wrote a rejection letter. It favored young artists and the health sector. He had several causes at heart, such as the Maisonnée de Laval, Ivry-sur-le-Lac, the Auberge du Nouveau Chemin, the founding of the Hôtel-Dieu hospital, the Orchestre Métropolitain, the Pavillon des Arts de Sainte-Adèle. , to name just a few. He did everything he could to make these organizations successful. When he believed in a cause, he was tireless and could devote countless hours to it, sometimes more than for Le Journal de Montréal and its printing houses.



For the Pavillon des Arts, for example, he was not counting his time; he decided on the layout of the program, the artists, and the photographs. If necessary, he even mobilized his secretaries Micheline Bourget and Nicole Germain to assist him, in addition to my secretary Martine Bérubé who took care of it almost full time.

He was giving an average of \$ 2 million a year, including free advertising and services. One year, the amount of newspaper advertising amounted to \$ 225,000 for the Pavillon des Arts alone.

He was so effective when he devoted himself to a work, that he had even managed to generate profits for the Pavillon des Arts, which had been started as a non-profit activity. At one point he thought to himself, "I donate money, I don't see why my suppliers who I pay well and who make a profit with my businesses wouldn't put it into my work. "So he approached Hydro-Quebec, the banks, the offices of lawyers and accountants, as well as most of the suppliers of Quebecor. In the end, the Pavilion received more money in its coffers than it did. was spending it.

In the space of a few years, we have raised a total of over \$ 120,000 in sponsorships for the Pavilion.

He could come and consult me twice a day for questions concerning the Pavilion. He also had recourse to the advice of Marie Rémillard, then director of the Orchestre Métropolitain, whose activities he also financed. He wanted her to offer him, up-and-coming young artists. He never chose them at random. He had to like their job.

Many Quebec artists owe a lot to Pierre Péladeau for the help he gave them in one way or another during their careers. Péladeau maintained a close relationship with all the artistic environment that he loved.

To add a little more credibility to the evenings at the Pavillon des Arts in Sainte-Adèle, I suggested that she invite a personality from the artistic community to act as master of ceremonies. He was enormously seduced by this concept

which allowed him to solicit an actor, a journalist or a popular singer to present the concert at the Pavilion. Obviously, a photograph of the personality was published in *Le Journal de Montréal* and in *Échos Vedettes*. As would be expected, once the idea was launched, the goods had to be delivered without delay.

He made a list of those he wanted to welcome as a host and I set to work to contact them officially.<sup>2</sup> From that moment, in September 1992, a host of stars visited the Pavilion to host weekly evenings. From Julie Snyder to Mitsou, including Albert Millaire, Jean-Luc Mongrain and Simon Durivage. Everyone we invited eagerly accepted.

When I started in 1991, Mr. Péladeau was approached to finance a performance hall for the University of Quebec in Montreal. This event coincided with the time of the crisis caused by the publication of an article in the magazine *L'Actualité*, which would trigger a boycott campaign against him.

There was a lively protest movement from UQÀM professors who did not want the Center to be named after the person signing the check. They wanted the money, but they didn't want to hear anything from the Pierre-Péladeau Center.

Originally, it was an idea that had germinated in the mind of Pierre Jasmin, pianist, and friend of Pierre Péladeau. Mr. Jasmin had already received financial support from Mr. Péladeau and he had taken the first steps to create the Center. He had informed Pierre Péladeau of his intentions by explaining how the project could benefit Quebecor. The cultural agencies of the various governments would advance the first funds, but to make the project a reality, private investment was also needed. Mr. Péladeau was flattered not only that he was asked to intervene, but also because he had always dreamed of having a center bearing his name, as was the case with the Bronfmans and Desmarais. It was a status he envied and with this UQÀM project, he was lucky to realize an old dream.

But the discussions were not going so well, as some professors argued that a center of higher learning should also have a prestigious name. For some, Pierre Péladeau did not represent university culture and he was a little too colorful. However, the latter was far from being self-taught. He had a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Montreal and another in law from McGill University. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of Quebec in 1985, he received a second from the University of Sherbrooke in 1996, and another from the University of Laval in 1997. He was first chancellor of the Université Sainte -Anne of Nova Scotia in 1988, appointed Member of the Order of Canada in 1987, and made an Officer of the National Order of Quebec in 1989. She was awarded the title of Officer of the Legion of Honor in 1997.

We were finally able to agree that the Center should bear the name of Pierre Péladeau, but that the concert hall be named in honor of a contemporary musician, Pierre Mercure. It is necessary to underline the work of the vice-rector Florence Junca-Adenot in the outcome of this crisis.

However, it was not because he had obtained his name for the Center that Pierre Péladeau would turn a blind eye to management. Among other things, he closely monitored the promotion that the Centre's management made in the newspapers about the shows presented. Sometimes it was announced that the shows were taking place at the Pierre-Mercure room, but they forgot to mention the name of the Pierre-Péladeau Center. This omission made him angry and he always asked me to phone the general manager and tell him to have it corrected. One day, he even threatened to stop payment on the check for his contribution. I told him that we couldn't do such a thing. He stopped dead and asked: "What do you mean, can't we do that?"

- But Mr. Péladeau, because the check has been cashed for a year already. "



He wished it had been otherwise, but, in that case, it was too late. So he seriously considered not sponsoring any event presented by the Center. He also didn't like Eric Larivière, then director in place. And if he didn't like someone, he didn't like his job even though the person was efficient in his job. With him, it was white or black. There was no gray area. He found that the programming at Center Pierre-Péladeau was too snobbish and did not reach ordinary people enough.

It was paradoxical on his part because he admired musicians of the caliber of Alain Lefevre and Alexandre Da Costa. He also adored Pierre Jasmin. He found that he interpreted Beethoven in a masterful way. So much so that he even offered to buy the pianist a house next to his in Sainte-Adèle so that he could come and play when Mr. Péladeau received. And he received a lot. Pierre Jasmin politely refused.

Pierre Péladeau also helped writers. If he found that such and such was talented and liked their writing, he would get the author published. But he also expected the author to continue producing and progressing.

Its financial support also left an important place for painters. The Pavillon des Arts was a vernissage and exhibition center. Pierre Péladeau held artists in high esteem, for example, Armand Vaillancourt whom he considered to be a man who stood up and defended his ideas. In addition, the two men gleefully hated Pierre Trudeau, a common point that brought them together. A sculpture by Vaillancourt is installed in front of Le Journal de Montréal, rue Frontenac.

From the moment Quebecor helped a pianist, painter, or writer, many others came forward for funding. In their minds, if the company was helping one pianist, it was about helping everyone else. It was not easy to manage all the requests. I have read and heard all kinds of arguments. For many, Quebecor had an obligation to give. However, unlike the public agencies that are created for this purpose, the private company has no real obligation to subsidize cultural or community projects.

It's a choice of direction and Péladeau chose his causes while demanding that the beneficiaries be encouraged to rise to the occasion.

Pierre Péladeau was a born organizer and an outstanding unifier. From a young age, he demonstrated this time and time again when it came to bringing people together, presenting debates, or even participating in an election campaign. He has often told the reasons for his expulsion from Brébeuf College: he had promised to distribute leaflets to support Jean Drapeau, candidate for mayor. The college administration had warned him to stop this political activity, which also went against the clergy's prejudice against the future mayor, and preferred General Laflèche, his opponent, who was in favor of conscription. But Pierre Péladeau had made the promise to distribute these leaflets and, for him, it was unthinkable to turn back. As it should be, he was fired. In the meantime, he still had time to make lists of names and distribution among the students. He gave his all in everything he did and made sure his entourage did the same.

Even forty years later, he was inexhaustible in the management of his affairs and even more in his works.

Funding the Orchestre Métropolitain wasn't just about signing a check. The room also had to be full. To achieve this, everyone had to get involved at all levels of the organization. He was concerned with the programming he wanted accessible to everyone. It was his way of contributing to culture.

At nearly every Metropolitan Orchestra concert, there were people in the audience cheering - and still clapping today - between movements. It is customary to remain silent until the end of the work. This is obvious to true connoisseurs of classical music. If this applause often upsets the conductors or others in the room, Pierre Péladeau, on the contrary, was reassured when he heard them. He told himself that he had managed to bring people that night who were discovering this music for the first time and that they would come back. It

was also a great proof of democracy and of rapprochement with the population.

We must never forget that even though he had grown up in a certain poverty, he had been educated in a bourgeois and cultivated environment. But he always preferred to hang out with simple and unpretentious people.

He could brew millions, but he was still a very frugal being. His greatest pleasure was eating an egg sandwich with his favorite soft drink.

He had great sympathy for the poor and did not look away from them. I remember having accompanied him one day when he was looking for a school for his son Simon-Pierre. He had heard of a well-established establishment in Saint-Henri, an underprivileged neighborhood of Montreal. I drove there with him in my car. We saw a poor family sitting on the balcony of their apartment. I asked him if it was possible for these people to come out of their misery. He said, looking at them sadly:

“It’s not easy for them to get out of this. Almost impossible.”

Another anecdote shows how he could solve a problem with very down-to-earth solutions. The principal of the college where Simon-Pierre was studying had informed Mr. Péladeau that his son, then 16, was performing poorly in school and that at this point he was in danger of failing his exams.

Pierre Péladeau had tried to reason with his son to motivate him to concentrate and to give his all to his studies. He pointed out to her the advantages of studying at one of the best private colleges, which was not given to everyone. No argument triggered the salutary reaction that could have propelled Simon-Pierre to the top of the class.

Pierre Péladeau hated hitting a wall when he wanted results. He arrived one good morning with the intention of going to confiscate the teenager’s car, which was of course registered in the name of Pierre Péladeau. I considered the plan bold and the measure drastic, but the principal concerned could not find a better solution.



I was delegated as second with Yves Paradis, helicopter pilot and driver of Mr. Péladeau, to go “kidnap” the car of the unruly. It was worthy of a James Bond episode. We had to hide in the college parking lot and make sure Simon-Pierre was in class. The last thing in the world I wanted right then was to come face to face with my son, “stealing” his car. When we got back to the office, we left the car in the parking lot of the building and handed the keys to Dad who, in the meantime, had taken great care to notify the principal. There was a good chance that Simon-Pierre would go to see him, in a state of panic, to warn him of the theft of his car.

The principal did not often find this kind of response from parents to whom he was accountable. He congratulated Mr. Péladeau for finding the time to take this unusual initiative. I haven't heard of the Simon-Pierre's academic results thereafter.

This fact, harmless to some, is just one of the countless things Pierre Péladeau could take when he wanted results.

As much as he could make generous donations, he was on the lookout for expense management. He watched everything. You couldn't “pass one” to him and he was strongly advised not to test it, as he always noticed it. If you betrayed his trust once, he never forgave you. I had to be careful.

One day, I had about a hundred copies of his official photograph printed for distribution to the media and to replenish our supply. I presented him with the photographer's bill. He came to my office to check the package of photographs and make sure the account was there.

For donations, he always followed up to make sure they were being used for good and for a good cause. He searched everywhere to be sure. He didn't donate and then forget it. If he found out that he had been cheated or lied to, he would send his infantry. He could stop payment on a check still in circulation, and the name (s) of the culprit (s) was added to his blacklist. It was final and final.

He also appreciated that those who received thanked him. If we just cash the check and just disappear like nothing has happened, and it does happen sometimes, he just didn't like it. It was a mark of ingratitude and there was no need to show up the following year to renew the request.

Sometimes people's ingratitude is sad to see. Oftentimes, successful people would look at the amount received and come back saying, "He could give me more. "

Pierre Péladeau had another obsession that is now part of general recycling practices: he used the backs of letters he received, but the content of which he was not interested. When he had a good quantity, he gave it to his secretary who took care of having them cut in four. He used these slips to write notes for his staff.

One day, I received a call from a rather anxious man who explained to me that he had been waiting for a response from Pierre Péladeau for a long time about his project. I listened intently to describe all the steps he had taken to request a donation. If I remember correctly, it was a cycling competition. While he was talking to me, I automatically read one of the "little papers" that "Mr. P." had addressed to me. On the back, there were the coordinates of my interlocutor. I felt bad. If the letter had landed on the cutting board, he was sure his request had not been successful. I had to find the words to explain to him that "our committee" unfortunately did not comply with his request.

Pierre Péladeau regularly asked to meet people who asked him for a donation. When he was unsure of his judgment of a person, he would ask me to meet with him to see if he was on the wrong track or not. In principle, he had good judgment, but I happened to change his mind. He always thanked the person for taking the time to come meet him and if he walked them back to my office telling me to take care of them, usually that meant "get rid of them".

If he liked the project, he would send me a "little piece of paper" or come in person to say, "Call the accounts and ask

them to write a check” for such and such an amount. The check was issued the same day.

He also sometimes gave money to an artist who had not asked for it. Mr. Péladeau had attended his concert and he liked it. Knowing that he was not very average, he sent her a gift to encourage him to continue.

We didn’t approach him just to ask for money. He was extremely coveted as a speaker for chambers of commerce, companies, and conventions. In this regard, those who were not yet on our list of donations to make were on the list of talks to give.

When I started at Quebecor, Pierre Péladeau gave lectures for free because he said he didn’t need that money. For him, it was a contribution to a cause: if he didn’t donate money, he gave up his time. But he was worried about sometimes seeing empty places in the rooms where he spoke. We always came back to the same principle: to seek the maximum. He had come to the conclusion that if he asked for a fee to give his talk, the organizers would work harder to fill the hall. But he was not comfortable asking for a fee from associations that organized events to raise funds.

I then suggested that he take the stamp and pay it to a work of his choice. This way he would be of service to more people. This is what he did afterward. He gave over a hundred lectures during my time at Quebecor. Toward the end, he asked for between \$ 5,000 and \$ 10,000 and he donated the sum to one of his personal works.

He also gave his stamp when he was asked to advertise Loto-Québec in July 1996. He had initially asked for \$ 5,000. On the Loto-Québec side, the young woman who ran the production sighed a few times, saying that the budget was more the base rate for the Union des Artistes, around \$ 800. Pierre Péladeau had planned a higher amount. He wanted a \$ 5,000 minimum. The advertiser replied that she had to check with her boss first and that she would “get back” to him about it. He added: “That’s it, get back to me soon! ”

**A week later, the young woman recalled:**

**“Hello, Mr. Péladeau. For your stamp, it’s accepted for \$ 5,000.**

**- I thought about all that and now it’s not \$ 5,000 anymore, it’s \$ 10,000 I want.**

**- OK! It’s OK! ”She replied without contradicting him.**

**From then on, she knew who she was dealing with. And the \$ 10,000 was donated to a non-profit organization.**

**Pierre Péladeau was also involved in larger projects. During the last two years of his life, he had been interested in two very specific projects, including the Chair of Entrepreneurship, which he never had the chance to complete. Yet that was his intention. He told me in November 1997, a few days before his fateful crisis: “We settle this before Christmas”. When he took that tone, I knew it was going to be sorted out right away.**

**But before that, there was the Saguenay flood episode of July 20, 1996, and the story of the million-dollar donation.**

**He was friends with Yvon Martin, publicist and founder of Publicité Martin, whom he frequented regularly and with whom he often traveled by helicopter from Sainte-Adèle to Montreal. I remember a memorable anecdote that happened with Yvon Martin at the opening of the Casino de Montreal Cabaret. Pierre Péladeau attended. After the evening, he decided to go try his luck at the game. Mr. Péladeau had in his pocket**

**\$ 1,200; it was his budget for the evening. He lost them in five minutes at roulette. Then he looked at us and said unequivocally:**

**“I’m going back to the North. ”**

**He got up and left, leaving us stranded, Yvon Martin, Carole Gagné from the National Bank, and me. He took us by helicopter, but we had to get back on our own.**

**The flood caused this incredible catastrophe that we know in Chicoutimi. He was touched by this drama. He spoke to Yvon Martin about it.**



**“I intend to make a donation for the Saguenay disaster victims. It would be good for them and it would be good for Quebecor as well. I’ll give them \$ 100,000.**

**- Well let’s see Pierre! \$ 100,000 is not enough! - How is that not enough?**

**- If you want it to be worth it, you have to give a million. There, it’s worth it and the media will talk about it. ”**

**The reply was not long in coming: “A million! Are you crazy? ”**

**But not so crazy, because once the idea was in mind, it started to take shape and Pierre Péladeau really liked the concept. He stormed into my office as soon as he got back to rue Saint-Jacques and said:**

**“Quebecor will give a million to Saguenay! Come see me we’re working on this! ”**

**We had to “work on that”. I first teased him when he called Lucien Bouchard, the current Prime Minister. Mr. Péladeau had not spoken to him anymore and had struck him out of his vocabulary since the Quebec Economic Summit in 1996.**

**“Like that, you ended up talking to him! ”I tell him smiling. He replied with annoyance:**

**“We had to! I had no choice! ”**

**Then it was the chain of phone calls. He had made his final decision: Quebecor was giving a million to the Saguenay and he wanted to let it know now. What seemed like a simple thing got complicated and ended up bothering him more than anything else. Whether he gave a million or ten dollars, he wanted to know where the money was going and who was spending it. With the Saguenay episode, the Bouchard government in collaboration with the authorities of the disaster-stricken region had asked for public assistance by mutual agreement, but donations in money, food or clothing had to be sent to the Croix- Rouge, who would take charge of redistribution and general coordination.**

**This procedure did not please Mr. Péladeau at all. He would have liked to control the use of his million through the**

management of the weeklies in Jonquière. In addition, he was convinced that with a contribution of this importance coming from a private company, other companies like Bombardier, Power Corporation, as well as all the giants of the industry in Quebec, would follow suit. He was happy just thinking of all that it was possible to get thanks to his initiative.

Then he wanted the source of the million to be distributed as follows: \$ 400,000 from Quebecor Printing and \$ 600,000 from Donohue.

“We have factories in Saguenay and weeklies. It’s normal that we take care of our world. ”

Charles-Albert Poissant, his early partner and president of Donohue, disagreed. From that point on, I was literally caught between the tree and the bark. Mr. Poissant was not against the idea of giving the money, but he wanted to make the decision and that it was Donohue who got all the public credit for it. Mr. Péladeau, for his part, saw only one name for all his subsidiaries: Quebecor. Whether it was a printing house in Beauce or a weekly in Jonquière, it was Quebecor. He didn’t want to make a difference. He had worked all his life believing in the strength of a strong and united group, he was certainly not going to deviate from that idea, especially not for a million dollars. At the end of this ball game, I was still the messenger carrying bad news tossed from Mr. Poissant to Mr. Péladeau.

Charles-Albert Poissant might say to me to press Mr. Péladeau to change his mind, he had known him longer than me and must therefore know that once the big boss had made his decision, it was IMPOSSIBLE to dissuade him.

There was a check for one million dollars issued to the Red Cross of which \$ 600,000 came from Donohue and \$ 400,000 from Quebecor Printing, as expected.

That was not all. He made a point of going to present Quebecor’s donation in person in Chicoutimi. We got there with his helicopter. Once there, he met the director of the Red Cross responsible for the fundraising operation and asked

him how much the relief committee had received in addition to his million.

I don't know what words to use to describe Mr. Péladeau's disappointment when he realized there had been no follow-up, no ripple effect as he hoped. What depressed him the most was to find that instead of being motivated to activate the process and make this contribution fruitful, the people of the organization had not really made an extra effort to solicit other companies. Mr. Péladeau couldn't get over it. He was all the more embittered by this lethargy as he was convinced that if he had been able to handle this donation on his own, there would have been ten times as many in the coffers of the Relief Committee.

A major flood hit an area of Saskatchewan in the days that followed. Mr. Péladeau was very angry when to turn the iron on the wound, he learned that the Red Cross had used the Saguenay relief funds to give part of them to the victims of the other province. He found the gesture unacceptable and incomprehensible.

"I gave this money to help my world, not the others. It was in Quebec that it had to stay. I knew I couldn't trust the Red Cross guy. "He never got over this episode.

His last philanthropic project, which he considered his last major contribution to society, was the creation of an entrepreneurship chair dedicated to young people. In his speeches and meetings, he never spared his advice to those who came to ask him, especially when it came to job creation and start-ups. This work inspired him and he wanted to do more to nudge young people who wanted to take charge and succeed.

The idea for this chair came to him during his travels, which took him to give lectures all over the place. He loved the Moncton area. He found the Acadians to be energetic and in solidarity with their community. At a conference at the Université de Moncton on January 25, 1997, he spoke about this idea to the rector and department heads.

At the start, Mr. Péladeau foresaw a modest project. He wanted to start with an amount of \$ 100,000 to \$ 150,000 split between two or three universities. The universities, on the other hand, were aiming for around one or two million dollars. They also wanted to have the money and manage it while Mr. Péladeau wanted to take care of the management from Quebecor.

He liked the Université de Moncton very much. He found there the spirit of action he was looking for, but he felt it was too far from Montreal. He would have been called upon to move and he didn't have so much energy to devote to traveling.

Several other universities also wanted to obtain the chair. The people from Laval University claimed that they represented entrepreneurship in Quebec, and the people from Sherbrooke University said the same thing; The École des Hautes Etudes Commerciales proposed to join an additional number of students, while the University of Quebec in Montreal claimed to be young, dynamic, and so on. In short, there were several sellers.

Finally, people spoke to each other and it was Laurent Beaudoin, president of Bombardier, who contacted Pierre Péladeau to suggest a meeting at the Saint-Denis club. This meeting was to bring together all the representatives of the major universities in Quebec and unlock the project. Mr. Beaudoin represented the University of Sherbrooke.

You had to see the group and the difference in mentality that existed between the academics and the entrepreneurs present. Things were not going fast enough for Mr. Péladeau's liking. It was not in his nature to create management or study committees. He found academics wasting too much time writing reports that no one read. The academics thought theory, Mr. Péladeau thought practical. You have to try to imagine him with his finger pointed toward the sky, like his mother Elmire Péladeau.

"I don't want to fund researchers, I want to fund finders. "



He had noticed that, even with the best will in the world, young people often had difficulty presenting their projects to financiers. If we didn't show them how to make a business plan, how to prepare a balance sheet, how to talk to a banker, no matter how many degrees they could imagine, they wouldn't get a line of credit.

As the meeting progressed I could see that you were trying to get water in your wine on both sides of the table and the will to find common ground was palpable. Knowing Mr. Péladeau, I had no doubt that he would end up having his chair of entrepreneurship and that it would help train great managers. Pierre Péladeau had already funded scholarships in a joint program carried out, among others, with Marcel Couture of Hydro-Québec. He had wanted to contribute, but he had also wanted to know what the scholarships were for. One year, he learned that the scholarship he had paid had been given to a biology student who had drawn up a "patent" whose name was unpronounceable and which was of no use in theory or in practice. This "patent" would never be developed elsewhere than in this session. He was all the more bitter as the recipient never addressed a word of thanks. He didn't want the funds from the entrepreneurship chair to be spent in the same way, on unnecessary "patents".

The chair project saw the light of day, but only after his death, in February 2001. This chair is headed by Pierre Laurin, president, and Laurent Lapierre, full professor at the École des Hautes Etudes Commerciales.

Pierre Péladeau received several honors during his life, but sometimes it was simple little demonstrations that touched him the most. This was the case when the President of the National Bank of Canada presented him with bronze plaques to install in the two performance venues he was funding. This gift came from the banker André Bérard, whose hand was however somewhat forced.

From a public relations perspective, the long-term duration of action is an important factor to consider when it comes to

promotion. I found it unfortunate that the actions taken by Pierre Péladeau for the Pierre-Péladeau Center and the Pavillon des Arts in Sainte-Adèle did not receive the recognition they deserved. For example, after a concert given at the Pavilion, no mention was made of Mr. Péladeau's participation, and there was nothing to indicate that the Pierre-Péladeau Center bore this name because of the businessman's devotion to the arts. So I had the idea of casting bronze plaques, which would pay tribute to the founder of Quebecor for his work. My goal was to immortalize the work of Pierre Péladeau a bit like museums and historic establishments all over the world.

I knew, however, that Pierre Péladeau would not want to pay for such coquetry. So I decided to go through the list of sponsors of the Pavillon des Arts de Sainte-Adèle in order to target the company that could finance such a project, modest in itself, of around \$ 5,000. I thought about the National Bank and spoke to Carole Gagné, Director of Public Relations, who touched on André Bérard, President of the Bank. He accepted the idea.

I finally broached the issue with Pierre Péladeau, the main interested party, to tell him about the project. He had to be okay, otherwise, the plaques would never see the light of day. He answered me :

“It's a good idea, but I won't pay for it.

- No, it won't cost you anything! They are paid for by a sponsor. The National Bank has decided to offer them to you.”

He was touched by this wink from his friend at the Bank who immediately said yes to my request for funding. For Mr. Péladeau, this gesture was a mark of respect on the part of Mr. Bérard and a kind of gratitude towards him. He often mentioned in his speeches how much this simple gesture, but carried out with good heart by André Bérard, had given him pleasure.

**He also asked that the Pavillon's bank account be transferred to the branch of the Banque Nationale de Sainte-Adèle, a sort of response to the wink of the big banker on the neighboring street of Quebecor.**

**Notes:**

**Some names among the main donors from 1995 to 1997: Hydro-Québec, the National Bank of Canada, Raymond Chabot, Martin Paré, Gravenor Beck, Bell Helicopter Textron, Martineau Walker, Trustar, Léger & Léger, Imasco, Lise Watier, Lévesque Beaubien Geoffrion, Dale Parizeau-Sodorcan, Laurentian Bank, Bombardier, Merrill Lynch Canada, Gaz Métropolitain, Bell Canada, Alcan, Provigo, Réno-Dépôt, KPMG Poissant Thibault-Peat Marwick Thorne, Loto-Québec, Groupe Aviation Innotech- Execaire, Métro-Richelieu, the Royal Bank of Canada, Air Canada, Alimentation Couche-Tard, Ogilvy Renault, Société Canadienne des Postes, Purolator, Les Arts du Maurier, Teleglobe, Clermont Chevrolet.**

**See the full list of Music concerts at the Pavillon des Arts, in Appendix 2.**

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**20<sup>e</sup> souper bénéfice et encan  
Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac**

*Sous la présidence d'honneur de  
l'honorable Lise Thibault  
Lieutenant-gouverneur du Québec*

*Spectacle & Orchestre*

*Maître de cérémonie: Francis Reddy*

*Vendredi, le 28 novembre 1997  
à 18h00*

*Hôtel Four Points  
(anciennement Hôtel Sheraton Laval)  
2400, autoroute des Laurentides  
à Laval*

*Tous les profits seront versés au  
Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac*

*Merci!*

Coût: 150 \$

N<sup>o</sup> 1125



**20<sup>e</sup> souper bénéfice et encan  
Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac**

*Sous la présidence d'honneur de  
l'honorable Lise Thibault  
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à Laval*

*Tous les profits seront versés au  
Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac*

*Merci!*

Coût: 150 \$

N<sup>o</sup> 1126

**Benefit evening ticket - Last event before Pierre Péladeau's death  
a week later, on December 2, 1997**





Pierre Péladeau Center - UQAM

## Chapter 12

### Pierre-Karl the Successor

Pierre-Karl Péladeau was certainly the one his father wanted to see occupy the seat of the president. The problem is that he never really confirmed the position to him during his lifetime and furthermore kept him on a tightrope by opposing his ideas and his management methods.

Unlike his father, Pierre-Karl never wanted to be at the forefront of the media. I remember when I had to work with him he always said to me:

“The star is my father! I am not an actor. ”

Maybe he will change his mind one day, but Pierre-Karl Péladeau does not see himself as a press boss. He has an industrial way of approaching things. For PKP, as he was popularly known at the time, it was more important to maximize the economic benefits of newspapers and printing works than to convey a nationalist message like his father always did.

Pierre-Karl normally had to wait four or five years after the death of his father before taking over the empire. I remember just before I left in January 1998 that someone in the leadership told me that young PKP would be “tamed” and he was going to have to wait and learn how to really do business. I then replied that it was a very poor assessment of the situation and especially of Pierre-Karl’s talent.

Indeed, less than 15 months later, at the beginning of 1999, Pierre-Karl Péladeau became president and chief executive officer of Quebecor. The young runner-up assessed the contending opponents and in a style his father would have

been proud of, stood up and seized the famous and coveted presidential seat.

Pierre-Karl Péladeau has a more modern management style than that of his father. He was traveling a lot when he first came to the presidency. He travels less today, but he always keeps abreast of international affairs. He speaks several languages: French, English, German, Italian, and Spanish. Pierre-Karl does not allow himself to be familiar with his interlocutors and he is very direct in business. On a personal level, he is more sympathetic, but you shouldn't talk to him about business.

Pierre-Karl displays his intellectual side more than his father did. He feels comfortable showing off his knowledge and can hold a discussion with academics or with people in high finance. He knows this area well enough to do well with the experts. Pierre-Karl Péladeau is certainly not a weakling or a coward, but he is shy at times. One does not read in him as in an open book.

His childhood was not easy nor for his brother Érik and his sisters Isabelle and Anne-Marie. Pierre-Karl lived for a time with the family of Raymond and Marie Laframboise, which allowed him to acquire a form of independence from his father. Marie Laframboise is an extraordinary and very kind woman whom I have had the opportunity to meet often during concerts by the Orchestre Métropolitain or at the Pavillon des Arts.

Even though Pierre-Karl doesn't like being identified with his father, he has several things in common with him, which is why the two men were still in competition. This competition would explain the pressing desire that Pierre-Karl has today to impose his own mark on Quebecor and to make people forget that he is the heir to the founder. He wants to prove that he is also capable of achieving great things. It is unfortunate, but because of this feeling, immediately after the death of Pierre Péladeau, some works like the Orchestre métropolitain



were quickly abandoned. However, other works refused by the father, such as La La La Human Steps, were financially supported.

I remember Pierre-Karl asking Quebecor to take part in the fundraising campaign for La La La Human Steps, a dance troupe that I found very interesting. Pierre Péladeau was almost angry.

He replied: “Mr. Bernard, you are wasting my time! ”

Another difference between father and son is in their political allegiance. Pierre-Karl is apolitical and he says he will make sure he is not in the country on election day.

Pierre-Karl Péladeau studied at Jean-de-Brébeuf College where he occasionally hosted a student radio program. It is said that he read excerpts from the Journal de Montréal there. It was daring because in Brébeuf we preferred Le Devoir. His first summer job in 1975 was as a photographer at the Journal de Montreal, like Erik who was also a photographer at the newspaper at another time.

Pierre-Karl then studied philosophy at the University of Montreal, like his father. There he discovered a Marxist vocation and rebelled against his family. He moved to settle with Charles, son of Roger D. Landry, former president and publisher of La Presse, in an apartment described as a slum on rue Saint-Dominique in Montreal. Pierre-Karl didn't want to know about his father's money and he worked at the Big Boy, a greasy spoon restaurant in the Côte-des-Neiges district.

For his 18th birthday, on October 16, 1979, his father organized a small party in his honor at the Saint-Denis club. Pierre-Karl stood up in front of the group and said:

“You are all bourgeois! I don't want to know anything about you guys. Leave me alone. ”His father answered him:

“You are free, but if you change your mind, you'll be welcome! ”

In 1982, at the age of 21, Pierre-Karl decided to move to France and enrolled in the master's degree in philosophy at the University of Paris VIII. He isolated himself in his studies



but kept in touch with his sister Isabelle in Montreal. In October of the following year, on his birthday, his father arrived in Paris and invited him to the prestigious Maxim restaurant. It was then a kind of reconciliation, according to what Pierre Péladeau said.

Pierre-Karl then enrolled in law at the University Panthéon-Assas Paris II. He continued his studies until 1985, then returned to Montreal and worked at Quebecor, while completing his studies in law and preparing for his bar. It was during this time that he understood the value of Quebecor and, most importantly, the potential of the company.

Pierre Péladeau was very proud of his son and he was happy to see his children take an interest in the business. By the end of the 1980s, Quebecor was starting to establish itself and acquisitions were increasing. The most notable was certainly the purchase of the Donohue paper mill in 1987 and the acquisition of Ronalds Printing from Bell Canada (BCE) in 1988, an operation which brought Charles Cavell into the ranks of Quebecor. It was then, in 1988, that The Montreal Daily News was launched.

Pierre-Karl Péladeau was not yet 29 years old, in 1990, when he led the acquisition of the US printing plants of Maxwell Graphics worth \$ 510 million. Observers agree that it was with this dossier that he began to make his mark.

Pierre-Karl was a tireless worker who stayed very late at night to negotiate, without eating or drinking. This relentlessness is reminiscent of the methods used by Brian Mulroney when he negotiated collective agreements for his clients as a lawyer in the 1970s. Pierre-Karl's operation added 14 factories. printing, which made Quebecor the second-largest printer in North America. It was then that the empire truly took shape.

Oddly enough, it was also from this point on that the relationship between father and son started to deteriorate again, at least verbally. It was as if the son's success made the father fear that he would be thrown out of his seat. Pierre

Péladeau almost always challenged his son's way of doing things. He claimed he still had a lot to learn, despite his successes.

This way of acting was probably his way of motivating Pierre-Karl and pushing him beyond his limits. When I worked with Pierre Péladeau, he often told me he was proud of his son. However, he never mentioned it in the presence of Pierre-Karl.

As early as 1991, I knew that Pierre-Karl Péladeau would one day replace his father. But in life nothing is certain and Pierre Péladeau never discussed the choice of a potential successor, neither in front of Quebecor executives nor in front of his son.

On October 30, 1993, during a conference on family businesses and succession organized by Dr. Yvon Perreault of UQÀM, and for which I had to prepare the speech of Pierre Péladeau, the latter asked me to underline in the text the important contribution of all his children, in particular that of Erik, Isabelle, and Pierre-Karl. I had spoken to Pierre Péladeau during a trip to Quebec and understood that he mainly meant that he was not ready to leave. I then had the idea of comparing him with another tycoon I had met during my stay in Moncton, Kenneth C. Irving, better known in New Brunswick as KC. The latter's empire looked like a little in Quebecor with the particularity that his three sons, Jack, Jim, and Arthur, then aged over 60, still called their father papa (Father) in the office. The founder, although 90 years old, had not yet passed the torch. It was not until his death, in the late 1990s, that the three sons became heirs in good standing of the company, but with a clause in the will that forced them to settle in the Bahamas, otherwise no inheritance ...

During the symposium on family businesses, Pierre Péladeau had therefore included in his text my allusion to K.C. Irving and he added:

"I'm very proud of the performances of my sons Erik and Pierre-Karl, but I certainly don't intend to leave my chair. "

**Some journalists have reported that this speech deeply disturbed Pierre-Karl, who wanted to give up everything.**

**I always thought that Pierre Péladeau admired Pierre-Karl, but I never understood why he didn't tell him. It's as if he couldn't manage to confess his fatherly love to her and his admiration for the energy and daring he showed at work.**

**I was present when Pierre-Karl arrived at the Hôtel-Dieu in Montreal on December 2, 1997. I can still see him in front of his father's metal bed that had been installed in a single room. The image was of a son who loves his father. During the first few days when I still went to visit Pierre Péladeau, I could see that it was Pierre-Karl who had taken matters in hand. He was always at his bedside and the others listened to his instructions. He said several months later in an interview: "I always had the hope of seeing him alive again. "**

**Pierre-Karl Péladeau was the heir in line to take over, along with his brother Erik. The will was never read outside the family, but we know that the founder bequeathed equally the majority voting shares of Quebecor belonging to the family, i.e. 66.24% of the voting rights as of February 6, 2002.**

**Erik Péladeau does not have the same personality as his brother at all and it is not surprising that the two got along very well on the division of power, and without any conflict.**

**Pierre-Karl Péladeau is a much more Cartesian manager than his father, but he has inherited his energy. Like his father, he swims 50 lengths of the pool each morning at the Sporting Club of his Sanctuaire residence in Montreal. Like his father, who said he was a tennis champion, Pierre-Karl is very skilled in sports. For a long time, he posted on his office at 612 rue Saint-Jacques Ouest a photo of him water-skiing.**

**Pierre-Karl has a daughter, Marie, born in April 2000 from his marriage to Isabelle Hervet, daughter of a major French banker. The couple is separated and Pierre-Karl is dating Julie Snyder, host, and producer.**

**I had the opportunity to collaborate with Mme Hervet on the occasion of the preparation for the wedding in 1994. Pierre**

Péladeau was worried about the protocol and, above all, he wanted me to make sure that the message he wanted to deliver to guests was appropriate. Later, in 1996, the presence in Paris of the Hervet family facilitated the coordination of the Legion of Honor file granted to Pierre Péladeau.

I also knew Julie Snyder well; she had collaborated on a number of occasions in activities organized by Pierre Péladeau. Julie is a very energetic girl, but she had a difficult childhood, like Pierre-Karl. I had regular professional contact with Julie before Mr. Péladeau passed away in 1997, but since my activities no longer link me to the artistic world, I do not see her often.

Pierre-Karl Péladeau has always been considered a handsome boy and it is certain that his father “mirrored” him. He didn’t hesitate to say that he found his son beautiful.

Pierre-Karl leads a rather sober life in terms of leisure and personal expenses. Unlike other wealthy businessmen, he doesn’t have any fancy or collector’s sports car. He enjoys playing sports and smoking a good cigar on occasion.

Since taking on the leadership of Quebecor, Pierre-Karl Péladeau has pursued acquisitions. He stood out for his daring and temerity.

The first major transaction was undoubtedly the merger of Sun Media with Quebecor at the end of 1998. The agreement was signed on January 9, 1999, in Toronto between Paul Godfrey, big boss of Sun Media, and Pierre-Karl Péladeau who was accompanied by Charles Cavell. It was following a hostile takeover bid in October 1998 by rival Torstar (Toronto Star) that Quebecor acquired 100% of the shares. Despite

The failure of his father in 1996, Pierre-Karl succeeded in establishing himself in Toronto thanks in large part to Charles Cavell who had retained his contacts with Godfrey. The new subsidiary, Sun Media Corporation, then enabled Quebecor to considerably expand its newspapers and



centralize the management of its publications, in addition to occupying a prominent place in the Ontario market.

A second major acquisition was the purchase of the US printing company World Color Press in 1999. The transaction reached US \$ 2.7 billion and created a new entity. Quebecor World thereby became the largest printer in the world, beating American competitor Donnelley. Quebecor World has approximately 40,000 employees and more than 160 factories around the world. The activities are linked together by the same virtual site from Switzerland. All paper, ink, and machine orders are consolidated from this site, resulting in better synergy, better prices, and, therefore, increased profit margins.

The sale of Quebecor's stake in Donohue and the merger of operations in April 2000 was another major financial transaction that turned the page on an important era in the history of the Quebecor Empire. It was, however, a downsizing rather than a new acquisition. Abitibi-Consolidated became the new owner of the Donohue factories.

But it was without a doubt the acquisition of Videotron that transformed Quebecor's importance in Quebec. The transaction, completed at the end of March 2000, lia Quebecor Inc. and Capital Communication, a subsidiary of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec. An operation in the order of 5.4 billion dollars. The structure of the operation granted 54.6% of the shares to Quebecor, 14.0% to Capital Communication, and 31.4% in shares traded on the stock exchange.

This takeover bid was bold, as the price paid of \$ 49 per Videotron share was much higher than the Rogers offer.

All communications assets have been integrated into the new entity, which includes Videotron Cable, Sun Media, TVA,

**Quebecor magazines, as well as Internet assets Canoe, Netgraphe, and Information businesses.**

**Pierre-Karl Péladeau is today at the head of an empire whose annual revenues exceed 12 billion dollars according to the figures of December 2002. As mentioned in the capsule of the press releases of the company, this one ci operates throughout North America, Europe, South America, and Asia. It operates five business lines: newspaper, magazine and book publishing, record sales and distribution, broadcasting, multimedia, and printing. Quebecor has nearly 60,000 employees in fifteen countries.**

**From the small newspaper printing workshop of the Journal de Rosemont saved from bankruptcy in 1950 by Pierre Péladeau, thanks to a loan of \$ 1,500 from his mother Elmire, the dream has exceeded the greatest expectations. It took half a century for the Quebec company to assert itself and transcend borders.**

**The founder's son, Pierre-Karl Péladeau, was born 11 years after the start of the adventure, but today he finds himself at the helm of one of the most important industrial creations of our time.**

**Pierre Péladeau's dream was to make his father forget his bankruptcy and prove to his mother, among other things, that he was a better businessman. He won his bet. Now it's his own son's turn to step on the scene and try to show that the adventure continues.**

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**Pierre-Karl Péladeau - 1997**





**Érik Péladeau, Pierre Péladeau and Pierre-Karl Péladeau**



**Pierre-Karl Péladeau, Julie Snyder, Jean Neveu**





**The second helicopter of Quebecor - Model Longranger IV 206-14**

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## Chapter 13

### After Pierre Péladeau

History repeats itself over and over again. Young entrepreneurs, men or women, start a business from a simple idea. The business grows, sometimes beyond all expectations, and it becomes gigantic.

Then the cycle turns. The young entrepreneur grows old and he passes away. His children, if he has any, can then take over or move on by selling the business.

Quebecor's story is not unique. This is the story of a successful family business where we are in the second generation. What does the future hold for us?

Pierre Péladeau often repeated:

"You are not born an entrepreneur, you become one. "

He also said that there are three kinds of people:

"Those who are part of the parade; those who watch the parade and those who don't know there is a parade. "

Pierre Péladeau not only led the parade, he created it.

A reporter asked him a few months before his death if he was happy as the end approached. He has answered :

"I have been successful in life, but I have not been successful in my life. "

This is an important nuance. Pierre Péladeau chose to devote his life to building an empire, to the detriment of his private life and at the expense of his own happiness. But Mr. Péladeau was a rebel and he did not want to be imposed on him. We can assume that he made his choices until the end of his life.

What will happen to the Quebecor Empire? Pierre-Karl Péladeau continues the momentum started by his father in a

frantic and almost dangerous way. Some see him as a racing driver heading straight into a concrete wall.

The size of the Quebecor Empire is enormous, but its evolution has been gradual and it has benefited from one-off events throughout its history. Moreover, the content of the critics is not very different today, in 2003, from what it was in 1990. It suffices to re-read the article published in the magazine *L'Actualité* of April 15, 1990, precisely that which so upset Pierre Péladeau and his company. Financial analysts warned investors against Quebecor. Here is an excerpt from Jean Blouin's article:

"Quebecor's debt reaches \$ 800 million," says the financial analyst at Midland Doherty: that's a dollar ten for every dollar of shareholders. It's enormous! Most worrying is that the company has little room for maneuver.

"The latest acquisitions have been expensive. Interest rates are high. Donohue's profits are declining. We swallowed 10 million dollars in the Montreal Daily News before putting the lock on the door. Great Hebdo, which was supposed to wipe out all the Montreal Island neighborhood newspapers, is about to suffer the same fate: \$ 10 million has gone up in smoke. The stock market reacted, and in a few months, Quebecor shares fell from \$ 20 to \$ 13 (as of March 8).

"Quebecor may have subsidiaries across the continent, Montreal financial circles are wary of Pierre Péladeau. We find it unpredictable, and messy. Why, we ask, did you acquire Donohue when specialists were unanimous in predicting several lean years for newsprint manufacturers at the start of the decade? The presence of Robert Maxwell at his side (he owns 49% of the shares) is not entirely reassuring. "

A little further in the article:

"I don't want Quebecor shares, even for my high-risk investments! exclaims the provocative Stephen Jarislowsky, one of Canada's leading pension fund managers. I do not trust. I'll wait a year, even two. "

Thirteen years later, in 2003, the situation has not really changed with regard to criticism from observers. Only the target has changed its name. Today, rather than attacking the father, who is now referred to as a cautious and almost brilliant manager, the son is criticized with the same qualifiers that were once attached to the founder of Quebecor. It is claimed that Pierre-Karl is too daring and that he will destroy the empire built by his father. He was even criticized for selling Donohue, whom his father had been criticized for having bought. The article published in the newspaper *La Presse* of Montreal, dated December 5, 2002, presents an example of the attacks in good standing against the Pierre-Karl formula. In this text, signed by Michèle Boisvert, it is Stephen Jarislowsky who leads the charge, the same one who attacked the father in the 1990 *L'Actualité* article. Here is an excerpt from the article:

"Quebecor Inc. has good assets, but they are very poorly managed. There are too many good people who have left the company and its subsidiaries. The recent announcement of the departure of Charles Cavell and Christian Paupe, the two most important executives of Quebecor World, is a good example. Pierre-Karl Péladeau is intelligent, but he will not be able to succeed on his own. He currently has too many on his plate. He's running in all directions.

"Stephen Jarislowsky's firm owns 19.6% of the subordinate voting shares of Quebecor Inc.

"As of September 30, 2002, the total debt of Quebecor Inc. amounted to \$ 6.9 billion, of which \$ 3.7 billion was related to Quebecor Media.

"I wouldn't want to be in Pierre-Karl Péladeau's place. With the enormous debt that Quebecor has contracted, it is in deep trouble. Basically, he pities me a little. The situation is very, very difficult for him.

"It's terrible that Quebecor Inc. is in debt to the point where it finds itself forced to sell shares of a company that is doing



well, to bail out a company that is not working, "says Jarislowsky.

Later in the article, the reporter asks the manager what he thinks of rumors that a group of executives from Quebecor World, backed by Kohlberg Holding, Kravis Roberts & Co, of New York, have offered to acquire Quebecor. World. These rumors had been categorically denied by Quebecor Inc. as soon as they started circulating. In the article, Jarislowsky argues that if this rumor is true, however, and the KKR Group offered a good price, Quebecor should seriously consider a sale. He goes on to send a direct message to Pierre-Karl Péladeau, scratching him in the process:

"He needs a strong team, a good board, and a good mentor. Pierre-Karl Péladeau will also need to listen to his board of directors and respect the mandate given to him. Mr. Péladeau is an intelligent man, there is no doubt about it, but he is not an easy man for the people who work for him. "

Will Pierre-Karl Péladeau win his bet?

We will have to wait and see the evolution of the empire over the next few years. But one thing is certain: the more it changes, the more the same. Quebecor is not the only company grappling with change. It is a universal phenomenon: we are born, we grow and we pass away. What matters to know is where Quebecor's evolution is.

On the other hand, if we look at all the communication companies that have taken the turn to multimedia, there are also giants in this industry that have collapsed. They were, however, better off and had better foundations than Quebecor Media. Companies that have experienced this erosion are listed at the lowest level of NASDAQ when they are not among the major disappearances of the past two years.

But Quebecor Media is still standing.

On a practical level, it will be interesting to see the roles that the other children of Pierre Péladeau will play. What will Simon-Pierre, Esther, and "Petit Jean" do? Isabelle retired

from Publicor in October 1998 and takes care of her family. Érik is still very active, but discreet.

Often, when I am in Old Montreal and I walk towards the city center up McGill Street, I pass the building at 612 on Saint-Jacques Street West. Occasionally, I meet former work colleagues from Quebecor with whom I was in daily contact, and whom Pierre Péladeau particularly liked: Claudine Tremblay, who was at the time the legal secretary with whom I had to verify every piece of information. on Quebecor before publication; Micheline Mallette, secretary of Érik and Chantale Lalonde, his personal assistant; Madeleine Bergeron, secretary to Pierre-Karl during the years when I was the father's assistant; Michel Malo, house messenger who often helped Pierre Péladeau by taking him to the heliport.

It's inevitable, whenever the conversation starts beyond a simple hello, the exchange always hints at "the time of Pierre Péladeau". The comments are generally the same: "We liked Mr. Péladeau a lot".

The reaction is similar, even outside the Quebecor workforce. I often have the opportunity to meet Vasco Ceccon and Francine Léger, owners of Vasco Design. They were great friends of Pierre Péladeau long before I came to Quebecor. I knew them well because they did most of the company's annual reports between 1991 and 1997. Péladeau liked them too, and he appreciated their work. Often times when the graphic design firm sent out their invoice, they would exclaim that it was too expensive. He then telephoned Vasco and negotiated a discount of a few hundred dollars. Vasco Design no longer produces Quebecor's annual reports, but the owners of this firm also have fond memories of the founder.

As far as I'm concerned, when I left Quebecor in January 1998, I became a private consultant. I have contributed to several projects over the past five years.

Sometimes, I have to face the consequences of the past and the fallout from certain victories won by Pierre Péladeau. An

example of these consequences is the loss of a mandate that I obtained in Quebec in April 2001 with an important minister in the government of Bernard Landry. I had to advise him on communications. I started work on the morning of April 11, Mr. Péladeau's birthday, but around 4 p.m. the chief of staff, who was female, told me:

"I'm sorry, but we will not be able to continue. You are probably very efficient, but I got a phone call telling me it was best not to have you with us. "

I learned the reason later: a head of a major public relations firm in Montreal, very close to the government of Bernard Landry, had trouble with Pierre Péladeau. The latter ordered in 1994, on the occasion of the inauguration of Quebecor Multimedia, that an event organization contract be canceled when he learned that this firm had been hired by his son Erik. Pierre Péladeau had some against the president of the firm in question for a personal reason.

This is the kind of retaliation that can exist in the business world, but we shouldn't be too offended. In fact, two weeks later, I got a much more interesting mandate: to manage communications for Air France in Canada.

If you miss a deal, you get a deal!

History is a spinning wheel. Pierre Péladeau said that business is also like a spinning wheel. The important thing is that it never stops. That was his secret, he told me: always keep the wheel moving.



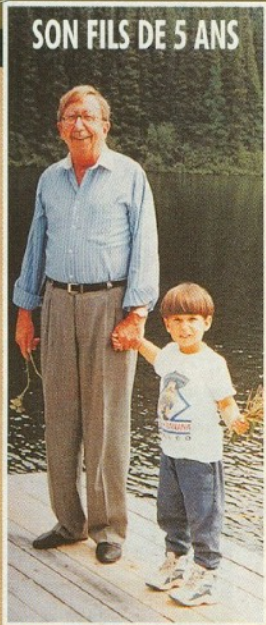
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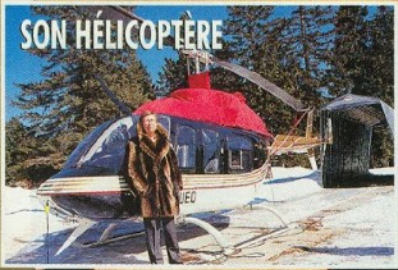
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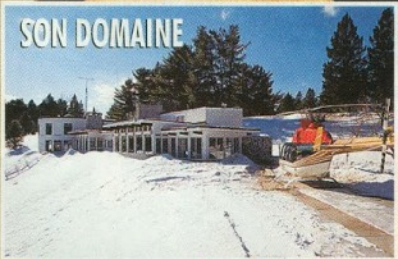
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PIERRE PÉLADÉAU

*Montréal, le 25 novembre 1997*

*Monsieur Bernard Bujold  
Quebecor inc.  
612, rue St-Jacques  
Montréal (Québec) H3C 4M8*

*Mon cher Bernard,*

*Le gros party de Noël c'est à Ste-Adèle que ça se passe !*

*Le Chanteclerc sera à nous, nous mangerons, nous rirons,  
nous nous embrasserons, nous serons heureux !*

*+1  
Je vous y attends avec elle (lui) le samedi 13 décembre.*



*Pierre Péladeau*

*R.S.V.P.      Avant le 5 décembre  
                  auprès de Chantal Chabot, poste 1376*

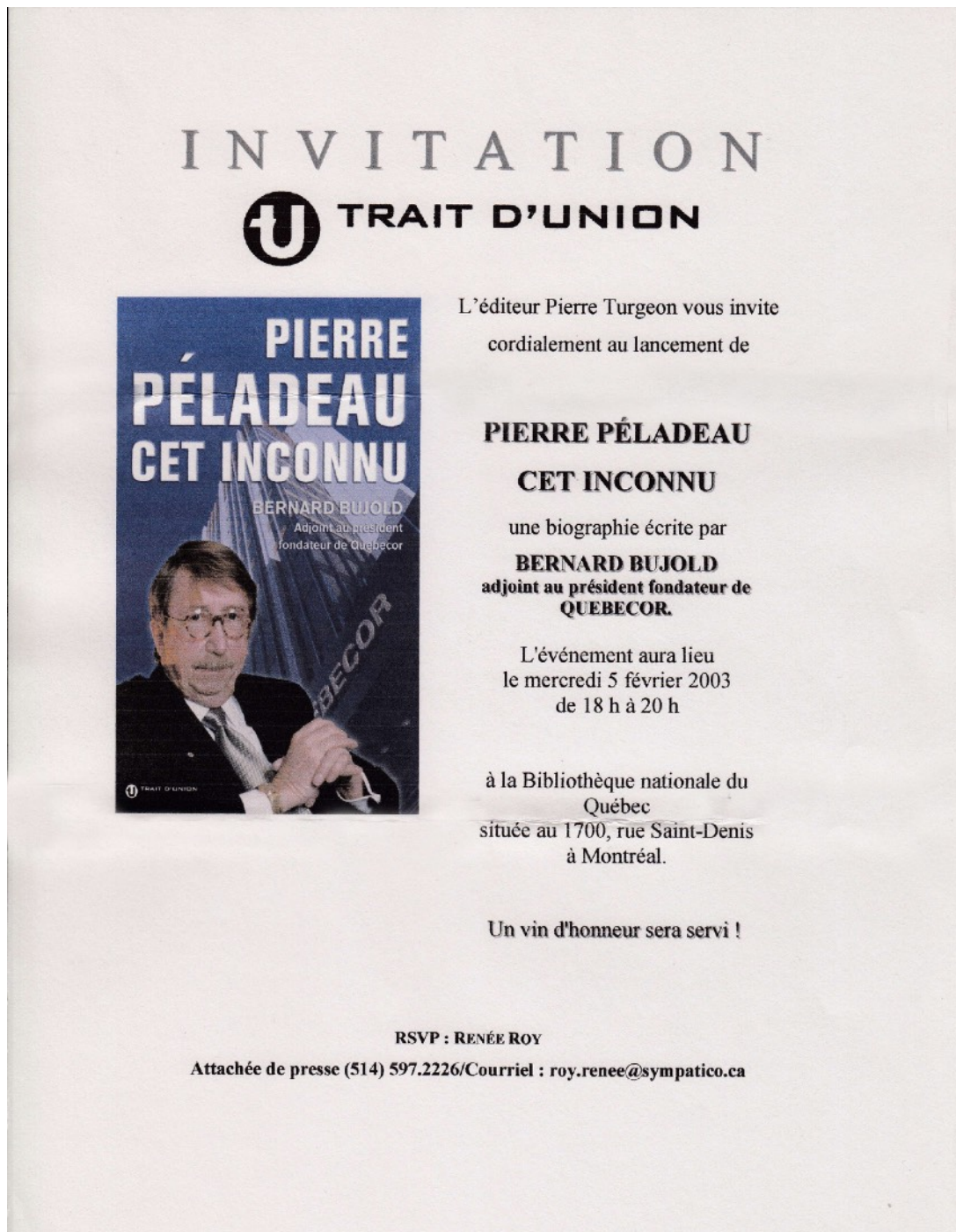
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Bernard Bujold  
Un homme dont le service  
m'a été si précieux.  
Ouvrant d'espérance et ne  
comptant jamais ses heures.  
Un homme qui traite la  
femme décrite en cadette  
et qui sait de ce faire

Un père inimitable  
P. Péladeau

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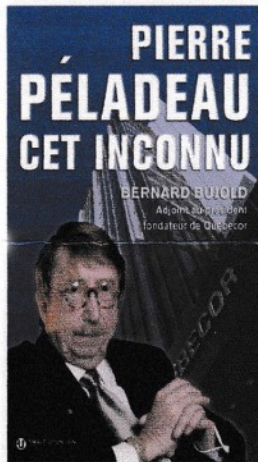
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TRAIT D'UNION



Montréal, le 27 janvier 2003 - Quand Pierre Péladeau tombe dans le coma, le 2 décembre 1997, son ami et adjoint Bernard Bujold l'accompagne dans l'ambulance jusqu'à l'hôpital, où il mourra vingt-deux jours plus tard, sans avoir repris conscience. Bernard Bujold signe ici un portrait fascinant du président et fondateur de Québecor, ce géant économique dont le chiffre d'affaires dépasse actuellement les 12 milliards de dollars. L'intimité et la connivence qui lièrent Péladeau et Bujold ajoutent au plaisir de découvrir des aspects inconnus d'un personnage haut en couleur, qui a prouvé que les Québécois pouvaient parvenir au sommet du monde des affaires. Véritable héros populaire, Pierre Péladeau fut aussi une source d'inspiration pour toute une génération d'entrepreneurs.

Présentée sous forme de confidence, cette biographie non autorisée nous fait découvrir l'homme public et privé au cœur de son quotidien et peut servir de véritable enseignement à l'art de faire des affaires.

Père de sept enfants nés de trois unions, il pouvait avoir jusqu'à dix maîtresses à la fois, qui connaissaient et acceptaient toutes l'existence de leurs rivales. Il admira et appuya René Lévesque dans la victoire comme dans la défaite. Ce livre traite aussi de ses relations tumultueuses avec ses premiers enfants, dont Pierre-Karl, qu'il admirait et jalousait à la fois, et de sa découverte tardive des plaisirs de la paternité avec «Petit Jean», le fils que lui donna sa troisième femme. On y relate comment il savait utiliser les talents des autres à leur maximum, dont ceux de Brian Mulroney, ses sentiments contradictoires envers la communauté juive et son engagement profond dans la lutte contre l'alcoolisme, dont il avait lui-même souffert.

Cet homme d'affaires redoutable et redouté a fait de Québecor le plus grand groupe d'imprimeries du monde. Il croisa le fer avec des colosses comme Robert Maxwell et Conrad Black et terrorisait quiconque osait l'affronter. Selon Bernard Bujold, Pierre Péladeau fut le Don Corleone du Québec, érigeant son pouvoir sur un réseau de faveurs et d'amitiés savamment orchestrées, les crimes en moins, bien sûr.

Son décès prématuré et la course à sa succession ont créé une grande incertitude quant à l'avenir de son empire. Pierre-Karl Péladeau est maintenant à la barre de Québecor. Qu'advient-il de ce qui constitue l'héritage de l'un des plus grands bâtisseurs du Québec moderne ? Bernard Bujold prend parti sur cette question brûlante d'actualité.

- 30 -

*Pierre Péladeau cet inconnu*, une biographie non autorisée, par Bernard Bujold, adjoint au président fondateur de Québecor, est disponible en librairie au prix de 24,95 \$. 320 p. ISBN 2-89588-039-5

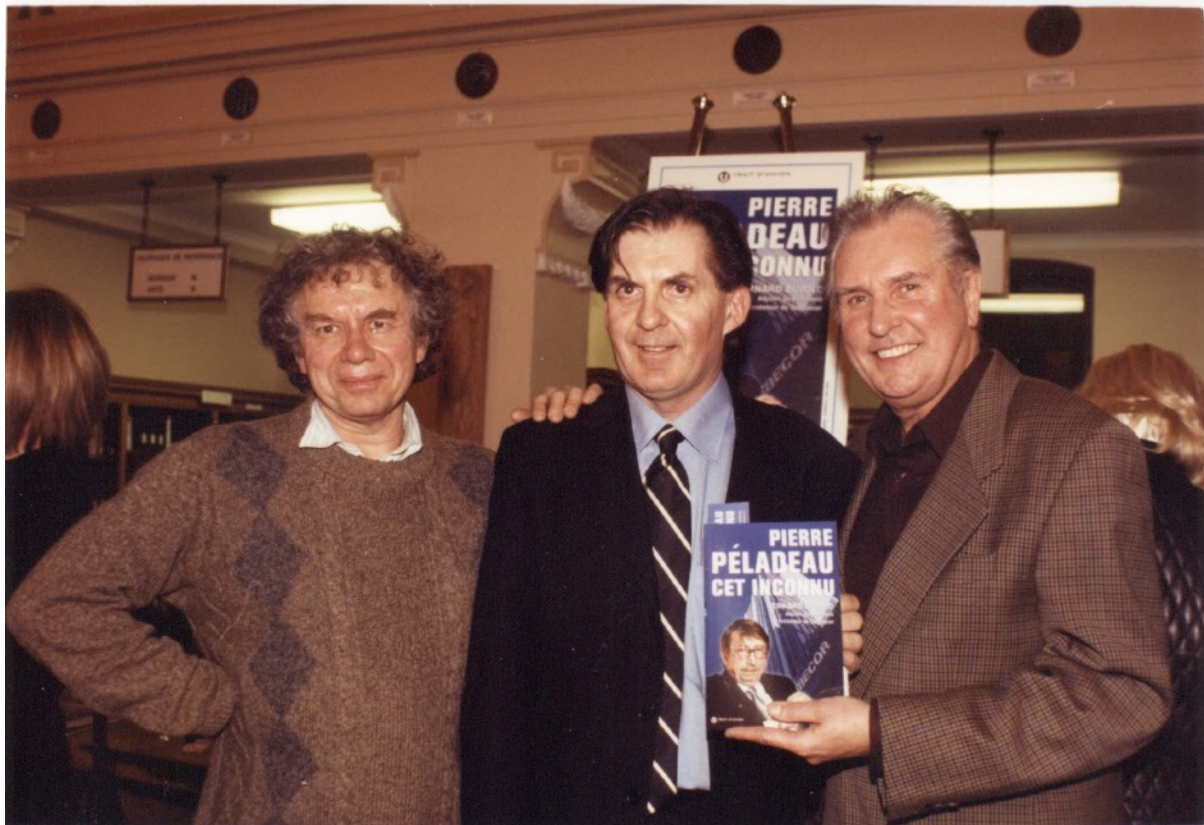
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Bernard Bujold - February 5, 2003





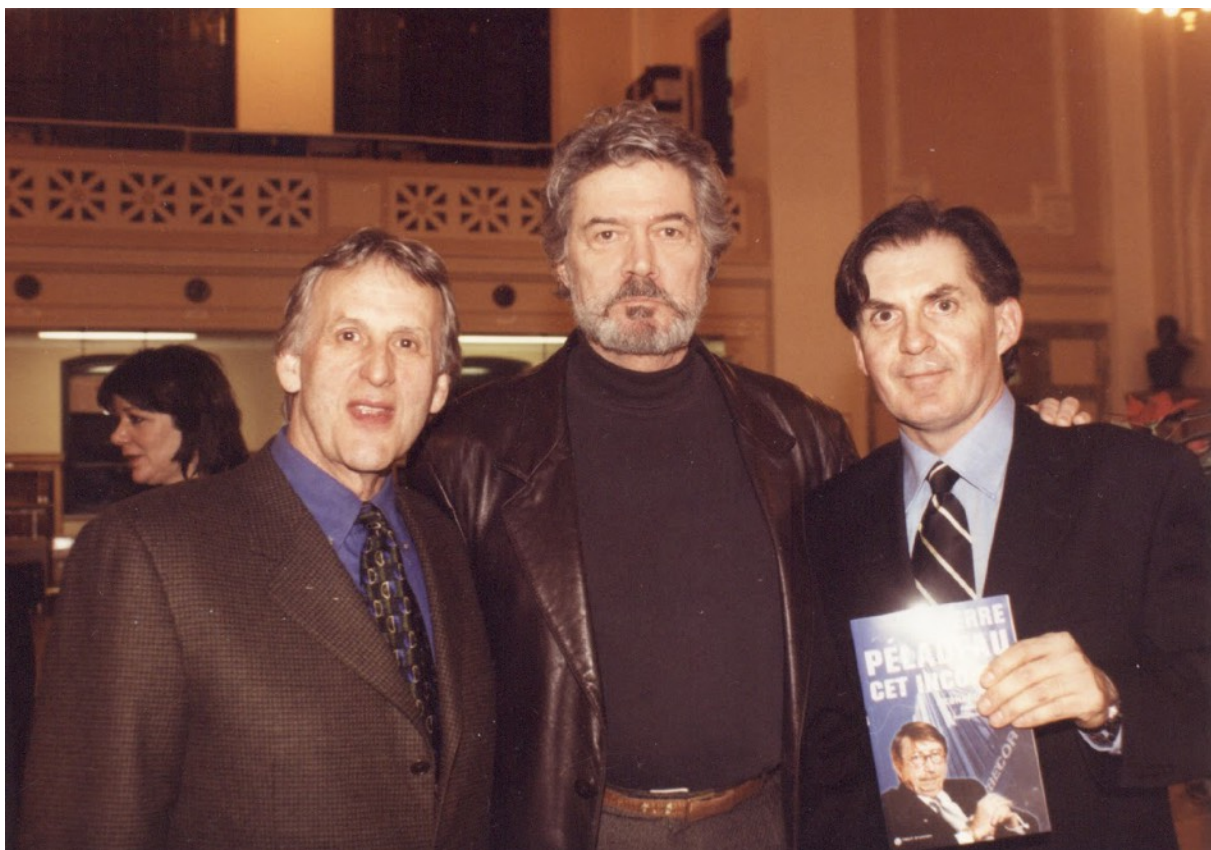
**Top: Daniel Pilon, Serge Turgeon, Yves Beauchemin, Louise Deschâtelets, Bernard Bujold, Danielle Ouimet, Serge Laprade**  
**Bottom: Yves Beauchemin, Bernard Bujold et Serge Laprade.**





**Top: Marie-Josée Longchamps, Daniel Pilon, Serge Turgeon, Yves Beauchemin, Louise Deschâtelets, Bernard Bujold, Danielle Ouimet, Serge Laprade. Bottom: Jean Beaulne, Serge Laprade.**



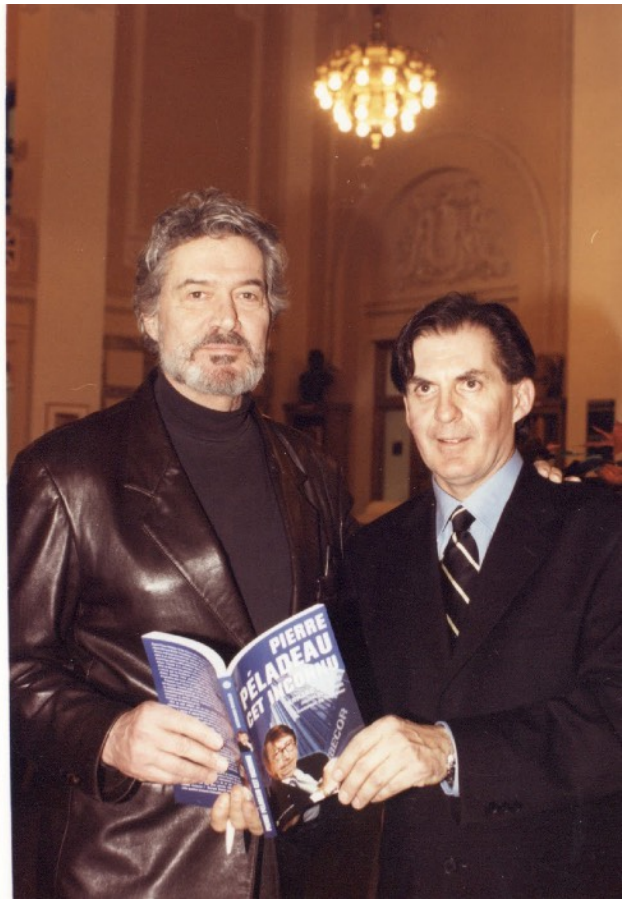
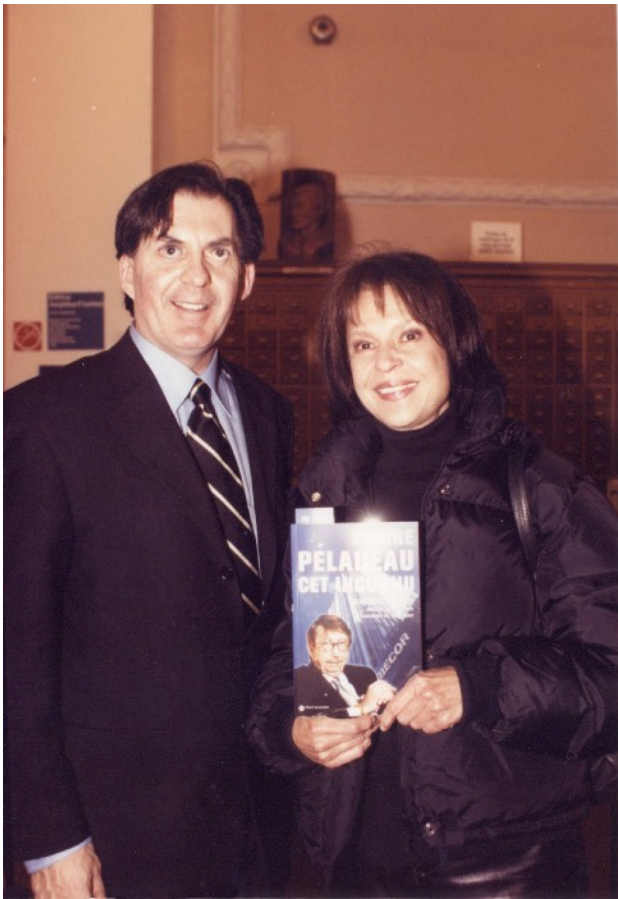


**Yvon Martin, Daniel Pilon et Bernard Bujold**

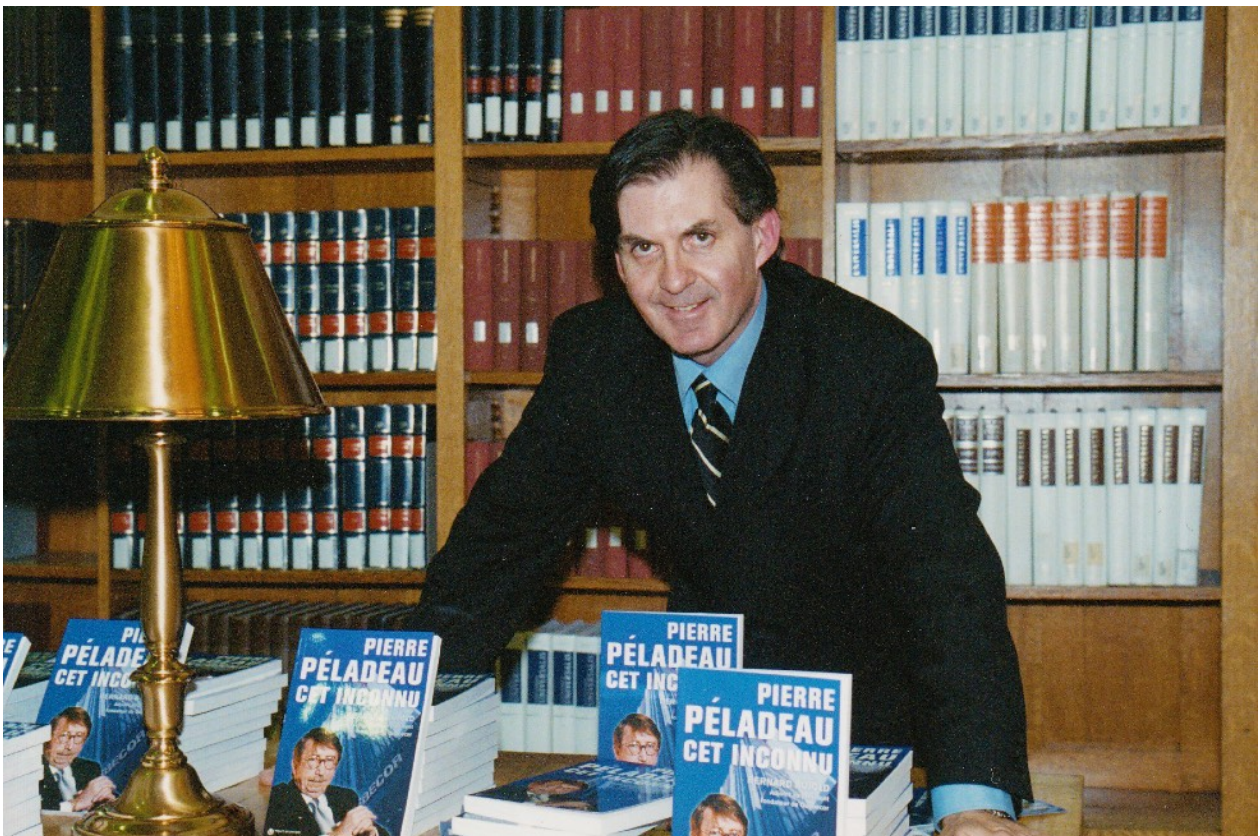


**Louise Deschâtelets, Bernard Bujold et Danièle Ouimet**

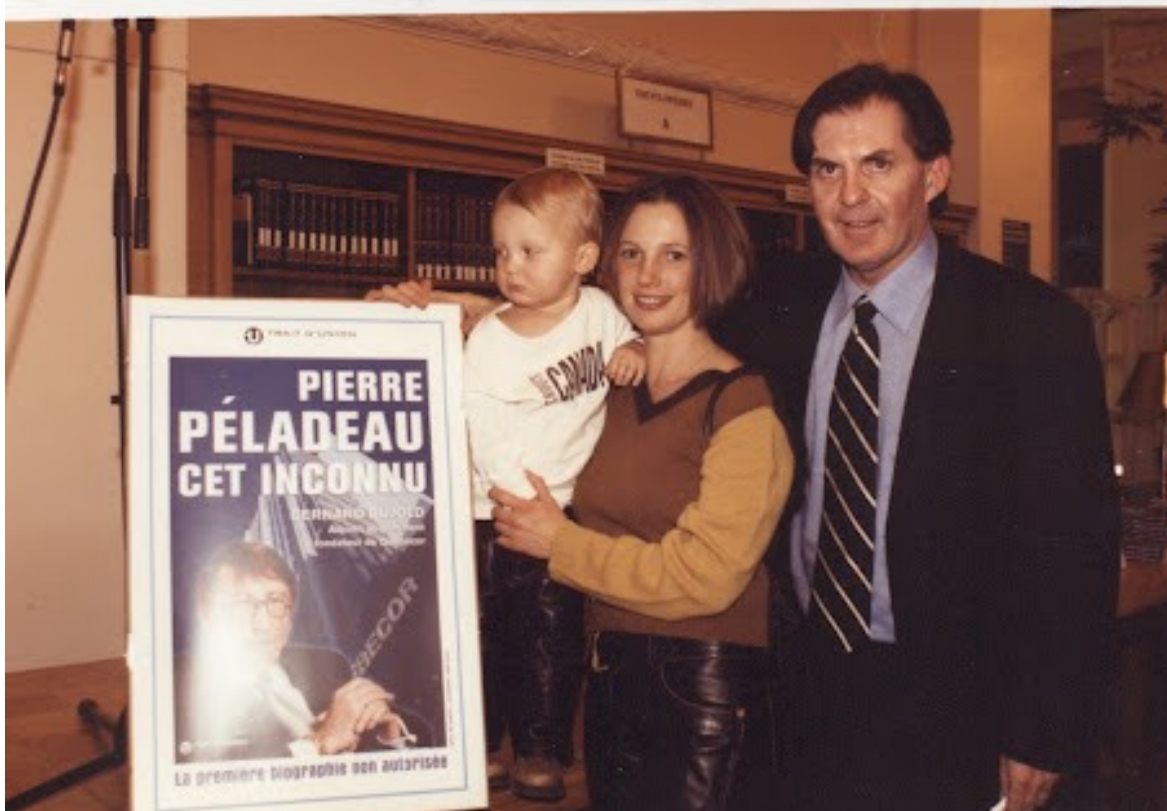
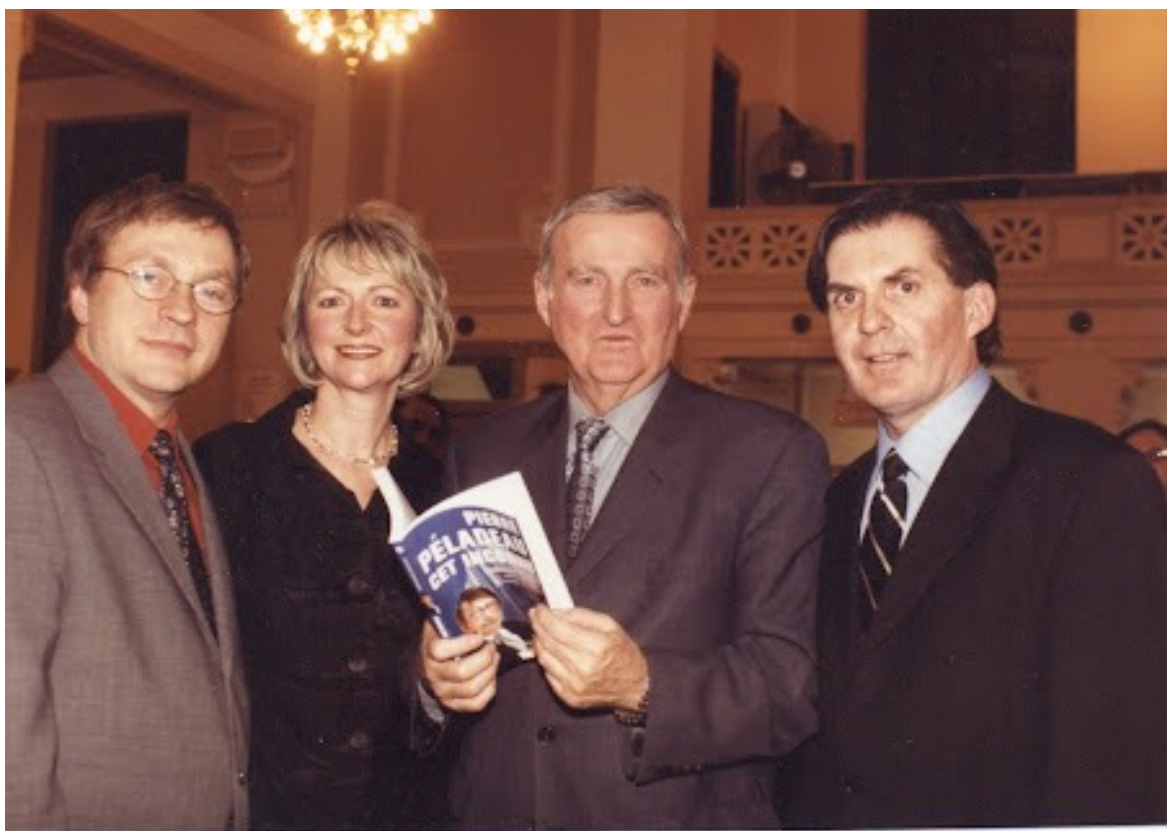




**Bernard Bujold, Michèle Viroly, Daniel Pilon**





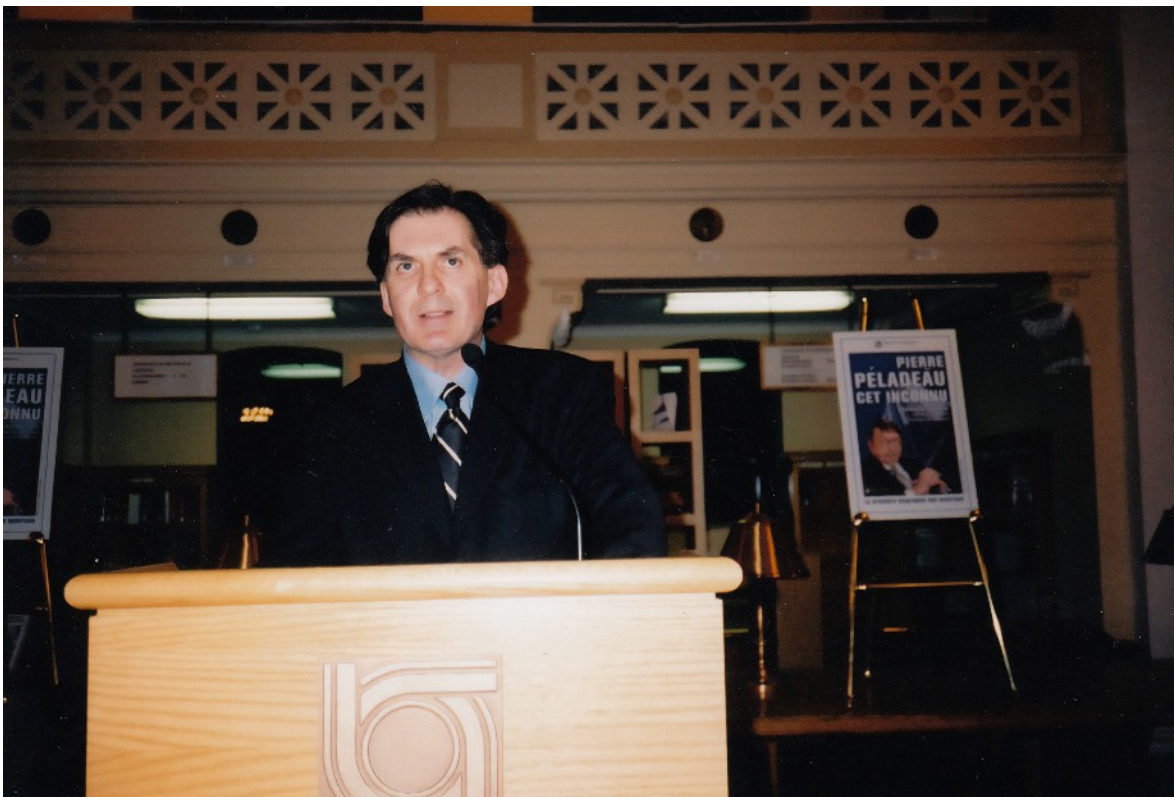


**Top: Montreal Mayor Pierre Bourque (center), Bernard Bujold**  
**Bottom: Heidi Hollinger , Bernard Bujold**



**Danièle Ouimet, book launch host**



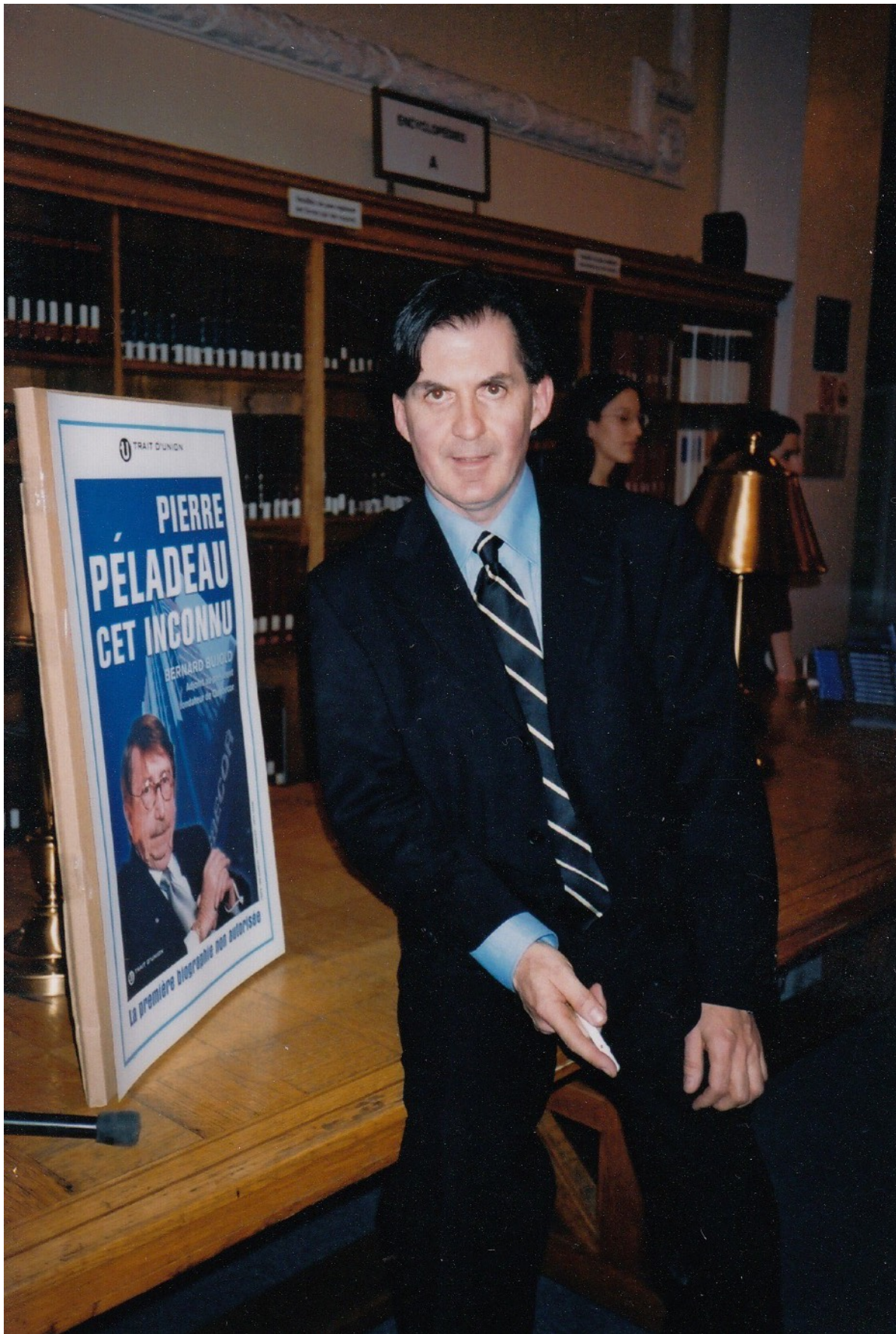


**Bernard Bujold - Launch speech**





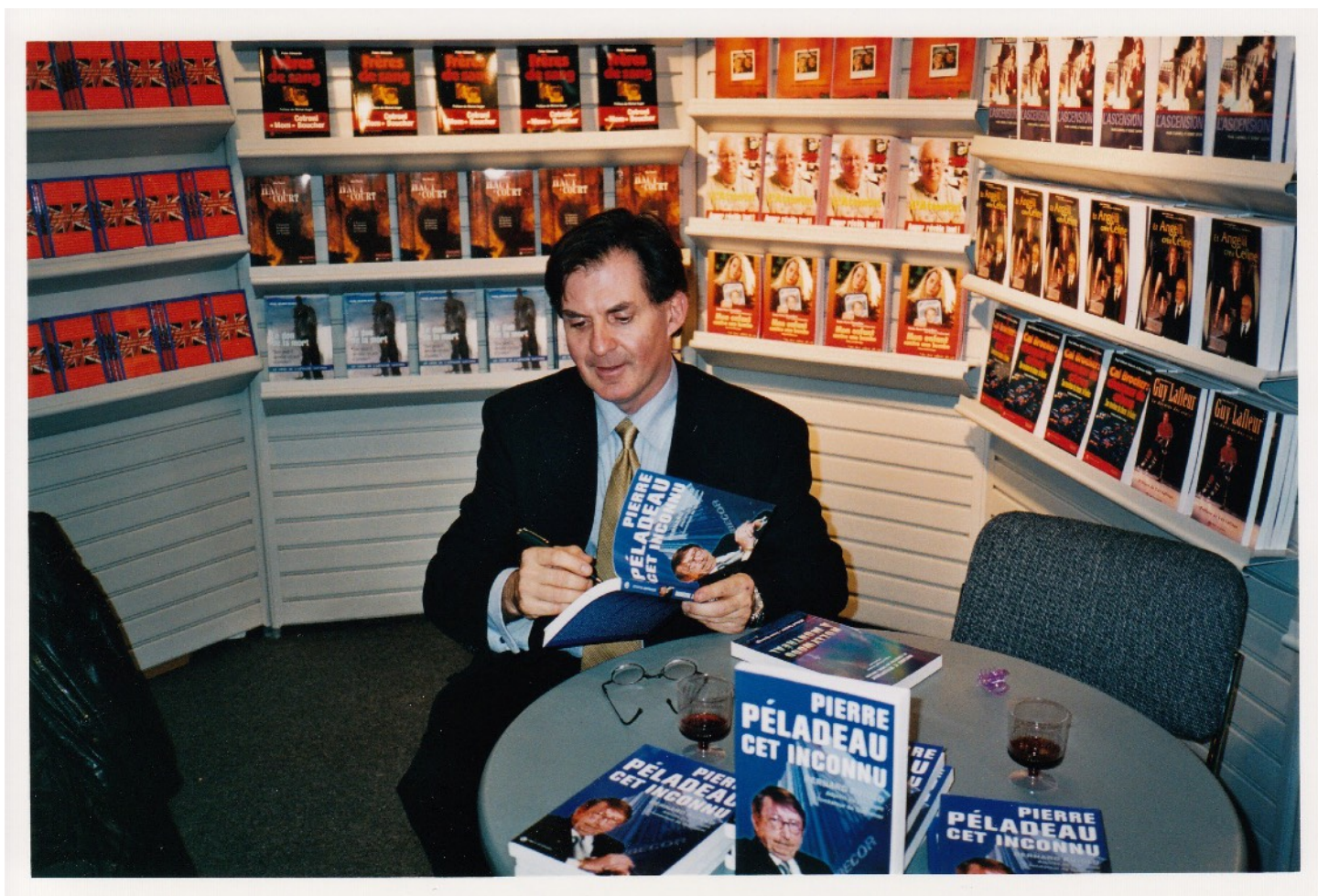












**Bernard Bujold at the Salon du livre de Montréal, November 18 to 23, 2004**

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# **APPENDICES**

## **Appendix 1**

**Conferences by Pierre Péladeau  
from 1991 to 1997 (French only) :**

**1991**

**Anniversaire de la fondation du métro de Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce de Châteauguay**

**Chambre de commerce de la Rive-Sud**

**Chambre de commerce de Lachute**

**Chambre de commerce de Saint-Laurent**

**Chambre de commerce de LaSalle-Verdun**

**Hôpital Charles-Lemoyne de Longueuil**

**Congrès du Club des Initiés de Montréal**

**Vernissage musée Marc-Aurèle-Fortin de Montréal**

**Gala Hall of fame de Boston**

**Drogue et société de Montréal**

**CACPRIQ de Montréal**



**Web Press Graphics de Toronto**

**Chambre de commerce de Contrecoeur**

**Congrès Les Nouveaux Performants de Montréal**

**Gala de la Fondation de l'environnement du Québec à Montréal**

**Bal annuel du Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac à Laval**

**1992**

**Chambre de commerce de Rivière-du-Loup**

**Chambre de commerce de Hawkesbury**

**Nacional Financiera du Mexique**

**Calgary Society of Financial Analysts de Calgary**

**Professeurs d'économie du Québec, Montréal**

**Ouverture du Centre-Pierre-Péladeau de Montréal**

**Institut des banquiers du Québec à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce de Saint-Jérôme**

**Bal annuel du Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac à Laval**

**1993**

**Ville de Lorraine**

**Dîner hommage aux PME à Montréal**

**Soirée des Alfreds, association étudiante à Montréal**

**Esprit 1993 US Sales Conference Quebecor Printing à Québec**

**Festival de musique viennoise, Ville de Lorraine**

**Club Voyage, conférence à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce du Montréal métropolitain à Montréal**

**Journée reconnaissance Quebecor à Montréal**

**Association des gens d'affaires de Vaudreuil**

**Bal de l'Escarbot à Montréal**

**Club Lions à Lévis**

**Amies d'affaires du Ritz à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce de Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade**

**Association antitoxicomanie à Montréal**

**Forex, hôtel Intercontinental à Montréal**

**Ordre des pharmaciens du Québec à Montréal**

**Le Chaînon, Claire Léger, 50e anniversaire à Montréal**

**Fondation médicale des Laurentides à Saint-Jérôme**

**Chambre de commerce de l'Outaouais à Hull**

**Conférence sur l'entreprise familiale à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce de Laval**

**Chambre de commerce de Saint-Hyacinthe**

**Centre de commerce de Ahunatic**

**Bal annuel du Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac**

**1994**

**Club Richelieu de Ville Émard**

**Chambre de commerce de Rouyn-Noranda**

**Artisans des arts graphiques de Montréal**

**Petit-déjeuner à la Relève à Montréal**

**New England Canadian Business Council à Boston**

**Ultramar à Montréal**

**Musée des religions à Nicolet**

**Chambre de commerce à Beauport**

**Jeune Chambre de commerce à Montréal**

**Provisoir à Québec**

**Agence de développement économique à Cornwall**

**Congrès AA Richelieu à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu**

**Canadian Direct Marketing Association à Montréal**

**Campus Notre-Dame-de-Sainte-Foy à Québec**

**Hôtel-Dieu de Saint-Jérôme**

**Chambre de commerce à Montréal-Nord**

**Fédération acadienne du Québec à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce Jeunesse à Rivière-des-Prairies**

**Rendez-vous 94 à Montréal**



**Lancement du livre d'Yvon Perreault à Montréal**

**Maîtres-nageurs à Montréal**

**Doctorat honoris causa, université de Sherbrooke à Sherbrooke**

**Chambre de commerce de Trois-Pistoles**

**Jacques Nadon à Montréal**

**12 points du vendeur à Montréal**

**Association touristique à Trois-Pistoles**

**Corporation de développement économique des Basques à Trois-Pistoles**

**Université Sainte-Anne à Pointe-de-l'Église en Nouvelle-Écosse**

**Gala de l'ADISQ à Montréal**

**Bal annuel du Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac à Laval**

**1995**

**Gendarmerie royale du Canada à Montréal**

**Hommage à M. Pierre Péladeau au Monument national à Montréal**

**Association des spécialistes du pneu à Trois-Rivières**

**Forces armées à Bagotville**

**Chambre de commerce du Lac Mégantic**

**Prix Pierre-Péladeau, UQÀM, à Montréal**

**Prix Grands Montréalais à Montréal**

**Gala Sacré-Cœur à Montréal**

**Bal annuel du Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac à Laval**

## **Prix Émergence à Montréal**

**1996**

**Club Optimiste Marconi, présentation du Sénateur Rizzuto à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce à Sainte-Adèle**

**Chambre de commerce française à Montréal**

**Association France/Québec à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce à Saint-Jovite**

**Fondation du Prêt d'honneur à Montréal**

**Gala bénéfice La Nef à Montréal**

**Table ronde économique franco-québécoise à Montréal**

**Lancement du livre d'Alain Cognard à l'accueil Bonneau à Montréal**

**Présentation d'un ouvrage de Patricia Pitcher à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce à Baie-Comeau**

**Hommage à André Bérard, président de la Banque nationale du Canada à Montréal**

**Institut de gestion financière du Canada à Montréal**

**Lancement de l'autobiographie d'Andrée Boucher à Montréal**

**Société de développement de la main d'œuvre de la Montérégie**

**Académie Lafontaine à Montréal**

**Prix Art-Affaires à Montréal**

**Gala Mercuriade à Montréal**

**Chambre de commerce italienne à Montréal**

**Association des producteurs d'électricité à Montréal**

**CIREM à Montréal**

**Bal annuel du Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac à Montréal**

**1997**

**Université de Moncton**

**Le Réseau C.M Q. inc., domaine Cataract à Montréal**

**Lancement de la collection “ Le Plaisir de réussir ” à Montréal**

**Jeune Chambre de commerce du Québec Métro à Québec**

**Conseil québécois du commerce de détail, à Montréal**

**Association des jeunes professionnels de l'Outaouais à Hull**

**Chambre de commerce du Lac Masson**

**Conférence de Patricia Pitcher à Montréal**

**Service Awards Ceremony Quebecor, Winnipeg Sun à Winnipeg**

**Fédération des Clubs de motoneiges du Québec à Longueuil**

**Association des vendeurs Remax à Laval**

**Chambre de commerce à Rimouski**

**Gala Excellence du Journal de Montréal, Hôtel Le Reine Elizabeth à Montréal**

**Association étudiante à Chicoutimi**

**Bal annuel du Pavillon Ivry-sur-le-Lac**

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## Appendix 2

### Pavillon des Arts special guests and the concerts they presented. (French only)

#### Annexe 2

#### Les animateurs invités au Pavillon des Arts de Sainte-Adèle et les concerts qu'ils ont présentés

| Animateur                | Concert                                 | Date              |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Marguerite Blais         | Louise Lebrun                           | 5 septembre 1992  |
| Mathias Rioux            | Christian Parent                        | 19 septembre 1992 |
| Gilles Proulx            | Quatuor Alcan                           | 10 octobre 1992   |
| Marie-Josée Longchamps   | Mario Duchemin                          | 7 novembre 1992   |
| Gaston L'Heureux         | Duo Carmen Picard<br>et Elizabeth Dolin | 5 décembre 1992   |
| Julie Snyder             | Alain Lefèvre                           | 23 janvier 1993   |
| Gilles Gougeon           | Duo Anne Robert<br>et Sylvianne Deferne | 20 février 1993   |
| Louise Deschâtelets      | Quatuor Claudel                         | 13 mars 1993      |
| René Caron               | Nicole Lorange                          | 10 avril 1993     |
| Jacques Boulanger        | Claude Labelle                          | 15 mai 1993       |
| Serge Laprade            | Jean-François Latour                    | 12 juin 1993      |
| Jean-Luc Mongrain        | Colette Boky                            | 26 juin 1993      |
| Angèle Rizzardo          | Orchestre baroque de Montréal           | 10 juillet 1993   |
| Suzanne Lapointe         | Les Chambristes de l'Île                | 24 juillet 1993   |
| Johanne Blouin           | Quatuor Arthur Leblanc                  | 7 août 1993       |
| Lise Payette             | Duo Marie Doré<br>et Charles Reiner     | 21 août 1993      |
| Marie-Michèle Desrosiers | Richard Raymond                         | 4 septembre 1993  |
| Aline Desjardins         | Alain Lefèvre                           | 9 octobre 1993    |
| Pauline Martin           | Les Chambristes de l'Île                | 23 octobre 1993   |
| Anne Bisson              | André Moisan                            | 6 novembre 1993   |
| Alain Stanké             | Duo Carmen Picard<br>et Elizabeth Dolin | 20 novembre 1993  |
| Marc Laurendeau          | Alexandre Da Costa                      | 4 décembre 1993   |

|                                  |                                          |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Agnès Grossmann                  | L'Ensemble de Cors Omnitonique           | 18 décembre 1993             |
| Benoit Marleau                   | Angela Cheng                             | 15 janvier 1994              |
| Mitsou                           | L'Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal | 12 février 1994              |
| Serge Turgeon                    | Martin Chalifour                         | 26 février 1994              |
| Francine Ruel                    | Quatuor Claudel                          | 12 mars 1994                 |
| Anne Létourneau                  | Marc-A. Hamelin                          | 26 mars 1994                 |
| Sylvie Fréchette                 | Quatuor Laval                            | 9 avril 1994                 |
| Michel Forget                    | Duo Anne Robert et Sylvianne Deferne     | 20 avril 1994                |
| Lise Watier                      | Pierre Jasmin                            | 7 mai 1994                   |
| Françoise Faucher                | Pierre Jasmin                            | 14 mai 1994                  |
| Louissette Dussault              | Christian Parent                         | 4 juin 1994                  |
| Simon Durivage                   | Richard Raymond                          | 9 juillet 1994               |
| Claude Léveillé                  | Dai Thai Son                             | 9 juillet 1994               |
| Jean Doré                        | Quatuor Alcan                            | 23 juillet 1994              |
| Andrée Lachapelle                | Claudine Côté                            | 6 août 1994                  |
| Pierre Marcotte                  | L'Ensemble Romulo Larrea                 | 20 août 1994                 |
| Daniel Pilon                     | Le Trio à cordes de Montréal             | 10 septembre 1994            |
| Sylvie Bernier                   | Les Chambristes de l'Île                 | 24 septembre 1994            |
| Jean-Marc Chaput                 | Jean-François Latour                     | 8 octobre 1994               |
| Jean-Marc Brunet                 | Josée Novembre                           | 22 octobre 1994              |
| Claude Jasmin                    | Angela Cheng                             | 5 novembre 1994              |
| Diane Juster                     | Alain Lefèvre                            | 19 novembre 1994             |
| Serge Bélair et Phil Laframboise | Chansonnette française                   | 3 décembre 1994              |
| Albert Millaire                  | Orchestre baroque de Montréal            | 17 décembre 1994             |
| Michel Jasmin                    | Duchemin, Saint-Cyr et Desroches         | 14 janvier 1995              |
| Jean Coutu                       | L'Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal | 28 janvier 1995              |
| André Bérard                     | Marie-Andrée Ostiguy                     | 11 février 1995              |
| Paul Houde                       | Duo Marie Fabi et Marcelle Mallette      | 25 février 1995              |
| Jacques Fauteux                  | Oleg Pokhanovski                         | 11 mars 1995                 |
| Raymond Bouchard                 | Brigitte Poulin et Michelle Seto         | 25 mars 1995                 |
| Nicole Simard                    | Quatuor Claudel                          | 8 avril 1995                 |
| Louise Portal                    | Michel Fournier                          | 22 avril 1995                |
| Pierre Bruneau                   | L'Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal | 13 mai 1995                  |
| Pauline Julien                   | Marc-André Hamelin                       | 27 mai 1995                  |
| Jean-Pierre Coallier             | Le Trio à cordes de Montréal             | 17 juin 1995                 |
| Michèle Virolly                  | Brigitte Engerer                         | 1 <sup>er</sup> juillet 1995 |

|                       |                                              |                           |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Janine Sutto          | Dang Thai Son                                | 15 juillet 1995           |
| Béatrice Picard       | Duo Darren, Lowe<br>et Suzanne Beaubien      | 9 juillet 1995            |
| Pierre Bourque        | L'Ensemble Romulo Larrea                     | 12 août 1995              |
| Daniel Paillé         | Quatuor à cordes Alcan                       | 26 août 1995              |
| Edgar Fruitier        | Alexandre Da Costa                           | 16 septembre 1995         |
| Patricia Tulasne      | Joseph Rouleau                               | 30 septembre 1995         |
| Angèle Dubeau         | Oleg Pokhanovski                             | 14 octobre 1995           |
| Guy A. Lepage         | Alain Lefèvre                                | 28 octobre 1995           |
| Andrée Champagne      | Atelier lyrique de<br>l'Opéra de Montréal    | 11 novembre 1995          |
| Corinne Côté-Lévesque | Duo Stéphane Lemelin<br>et Martine Desroches | 25 novembre 1995          |
| Jean-Pierre Ferland   | Ensemble Johann Schrammel                    | 9 décembre 1995           |
| Claudine Mercier      | Joseph Rouleau                               | 16 décembre 1995          |
| Stéphane Bureau       | Lucille Chung                                | 27 janvier 1996           |
| Jacques Duchesneau    | Duo Marie Fabi<br>et Marcelle Mallette       | 10 février 1996           |
| Charles Tisseyre      | Dana Nigrim, piano                           | 24 février 1996           |
| Bernard Landry        | Quatuor Arthur Leblanc                       | 9 mars 1996               |
| Pierre Maisonneuve    | Jean-François Latour                         | 23 mars 1996              |
| Gérald Larose         | Richard Raymond                              | 6 avril 1996              |
| Renée Martel          | Atelier lyrique de<br>l'Opéra de Montréal    | 20 avril 1996             |
| Marcel Béliveau       | Orchestre baroque de Montréal                | 4 mai 1996                |
| Louise Deschâtelets   | Les Chambristes<br>de la Cathédrale          | 18 mai 1996               |
| Jean-Luc Mongrain     | Natalie Choquette                            | 1 <sup>er</sup> juin 1996 |
| Claude Charron (TV)   | Louis-Philippe Pelletier                     | 15 juin 1996              |
| Mitsou                | Le Quatuor Morency                           | 29 juin 1996              |
| Réal Giguère          | Duo Lowe-Beaubien<br>et François Paradis     | 13 juillet 1996           |
| Guy Fournier          | L'ensemble Romulo Larrea                     | 27 juillet 1996           |
| Benoît Brière         | Alain Lefèvre                                | 10 août 1996              |
| Jacques Parizeau      | Pierre Jasmin                                | 24 août 1996              |
| Jean-François Lépine  | Karina Gauvin, soprano                       | 7 septembre 1996          |
| Chantal Fontaine      | Lucille Chung, piano                         | 21 septembre 1996         |
| Marie Plourde         | Quatuor Arthur LeBlanc                       | 5 octobre 1996            |
| Marie-Lise Pilote     | Louis-Philippe Pelletier, piano              | 19 octobre 1996           |
| Lise Bissonnette      | Atelier lyrique de<br>l'Opéra de Montréal    | 2 novembre 1996           |
| Marc Laurendeau       | Orchestre baroque de Montréal                | 16 novembre 1996          |
| Pierre Francœur       | Duo Marie Fabi<br>et Marcelle Mallette       | 30 novembre 1996          |



|                        |                                                               |                              |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Monique Lepage         | Paul-André Asselin                                            | 7 décembre 1996              |
| Michel Côté            | Colette Boky, soprano                                         | 14 décembre 1996             |
| Guy Latraverse         | Anne Robert et<br>l'Ensemble du Conservatoire                 | 18 janvier 1997              |
| Brigitte Paquette      | Quartango                                                     | 1 <sup>er</sup> février 1997 |
| Andrée Boucher         | Marc-André Gauthier, piano                                    | 15 février 1997              |
| Yves Beauchemin        | Richard Raymond, piano                                        | 1 <sup>er</sup> mars 1997    |
| Jean Coutu, comédien   | Atelier lyrique de<br>l'Opéra de Montréal                     | 15 mars 1997                 |
| Paul Arcand            | Henri Brassard, piano<br>et Yegor Dyachkov, violoncelle       | 29 mars 1997                 |
| Marie-Josée Longchamps | Louise Marcotte, soprano<br>et Marc Boucher, piano            | 12 avril 1997                |
| Marie-Claude Lavallée  | Jean-François Latour, piano                                   | 19 avril 1997                |
| Edgar Fruitier         | Louis Quilico<br>et Christina Petrowska<br>(concert bénéfice) | 26 avril 1997                |
| Stéphane Laporte       | Pierre Jasmin, piano                                          | 10 mai 1997                  |
| Reine Malo             | Trio Michèle Gagné,<br>Brigitte Poulin,<br>Geneviève Beaudry  | 24 mai 1997                  |
| Louise Marleau         | Les Trois Sopranos                                            | 7 juin 1997                  |
| Jean Cournoyer         | Stéphan Sylvestre                                             | 21 juin 1997                 |
| André-Philippe Gagnon  | L'Ensemble Kaffeehaus<br>et la famille Laferrière-Doane       | 5 juillet 1997               |
| Renée Claude           | Denise Pelletier, soprano<br>et Louise Pelletier, piano       | 19 juillet 1997              |
| Claude Dubois          | L'Ensemble Romulo Larrea                                      | 2 août 1997                  |
| Patrice L'Écuyer       | François Carrier<br>et Janine Lachance                        | 16 août 1997                 |
| Stéphan Rousseau       | Gino Quilico, baryton,<br>et Alain Lefèvre, piano             | 30 août 1997                 |
| Pierre Curzi           | Orchestre baroque de Montréal                                 | 13 septembre 1997            |
| Michel Jasmin          | Alexandre Da Costa                                            | 27 septembre 1997            |
| Marc Labrèche          | Philippe Giusiano, piano                                      | 11 octobre 1997              |
| Patrice L'Écuyer       | Atelier lyrique de<br>l'Opéra de Montréal                     | 25 octobre 1997              |
| Gilles Auger           | Classicus                                                     | 8 novembre 1997              |
| Danielle Rainville     | Duo Marie Fabi piano,<br>Marcelle Mallette, violon            | 22 novembre 1997             |
| Gilles Proulx          | Les Jeunes Ambassadeurs<br>lyriques                           | 29 novembre 1997             |
| Paul Arcand            | Alain Lefèvre, piano                                          | 6 décembre 1997              |

## PIERRE PÉLADEAU THE UNKNOWN

By Bernard Bujold



## Pierre Péladeau the Unknown

DIGITAL EDITION

This book is a re-edition of the paper publication written in 2003. I wanted to make the document available on the Internet, in French and English, for digital readers like myself.

According to my vision of writing, a book in virtual format is eternal, unlike a paper edition which lives only a few years in the library and even less time in bookstores.

Pierre Péladeau was a French-speaking leader in Quebec, and his audacity enabled many Quebecers to pursue careers in the world of communications, thanks to the Quebecor Empire created by Pierre Péladeau. Pierre Péladeau's example is an inspiration to many, even today in 2023, and I am particularly proud to have been at his side from 1991 until his death on December 2, 1997.

I considered Pierre Péladeau a friend, and I dare to think that he liked me...

Bernard Bujold

ISBN: 978-2-9821799-9-8

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## **SEE PART 2 THE QUEBECOR EMPIRE AFTER PIERRE PÉLADEAU**



**THE QUEBECOR EMPIRE  
AFTER PIERRE PÉLADEAU**  
By Bernard Bujold

## **THE QUEBECOR EMPIRE AFTER PIERRE PÉLADEAU** **By Bernard Bujold**

**This text was published in 2007 as a companion piece to the first edition of my official biography:**

**Pierre Péladeau cet inconnu, published in 2003.**

**The second text also marked the 10th anniversary of the death of Quebecor's founder, who passed away on December 24, 1997.**

**While the biography was a historical overview, the second text was more intimate, with confidences and a personal look at the Quebecor empire and its evolution after the departure of its founder.**

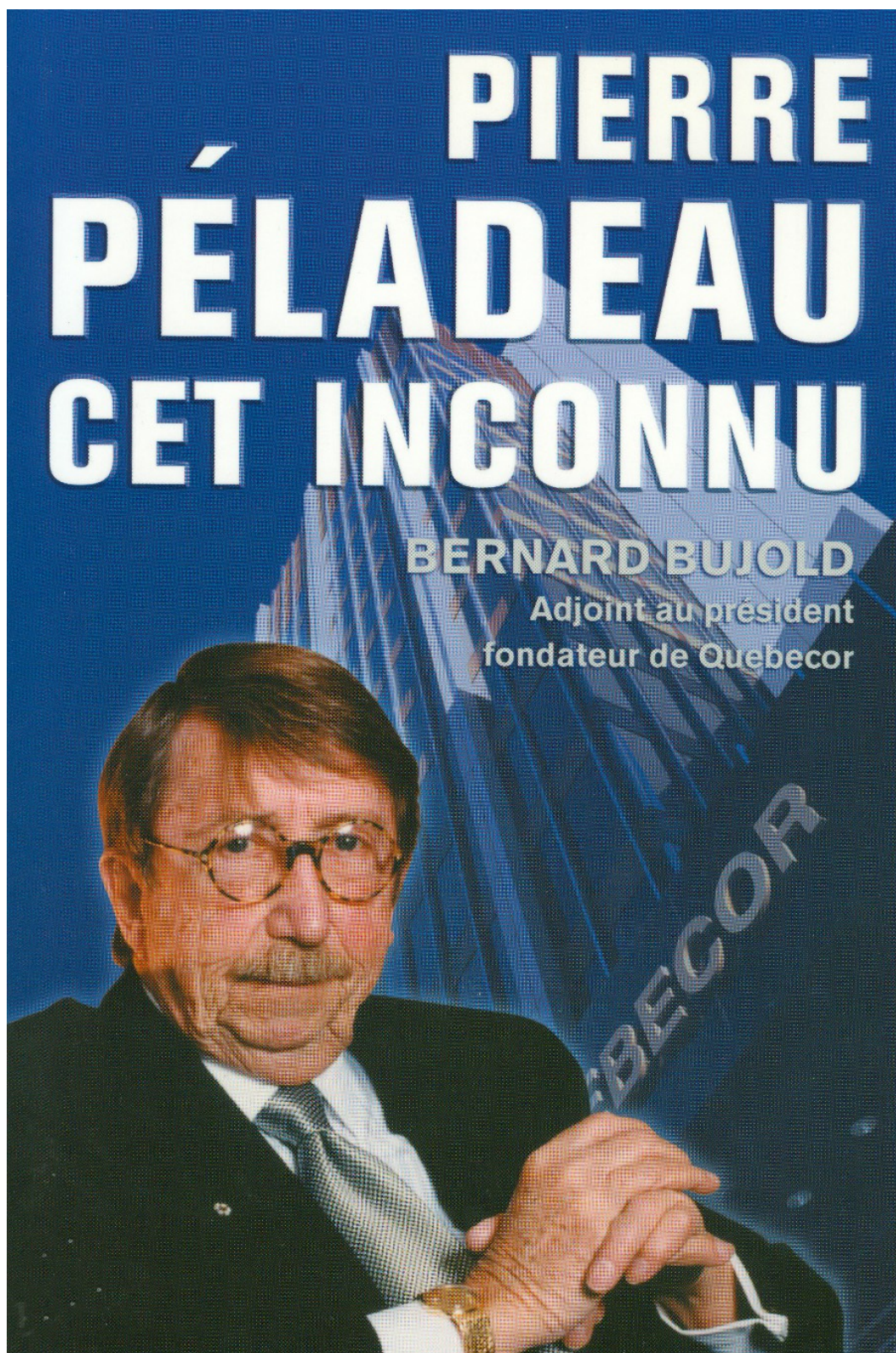
**In 2023, 25 years after the patriarch's death, I wanted to ensure a certain immortality for both texts by making them available in PDF format on the Internet, in both French and English.**



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ORIGINAL EDITION IN FRENCH  
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Quand Pierre Péladeau tombe dans le coma, le 2 décembre 1997, son ami et adjoint Bernard Bujold l'accompagne dans l'ambulance jusqu'à l'hôpital, où il mourra, vingt-deux jours plus tard, sans avoir repris conscience. Bernard Bujold signe ici un portrait fascinant du président et fondateur de Quebecor, ce géant économique dont le chiffre d'affaires dépasse actuellement les 12 milliards de dollars. L'intimité et la connivence qui lièrent Péladeau et Bujold ajoutent au plaisir de découvrir des aspects inconnus d'un personnage haut en couleur, qui a prouvé que les Québécois pouvaient parvenir au sommet du monde des affaires. Véritable héros populaire, Pierre Péladeau fut aussi une source d'inspiration pour toute une génération d'entrepreneurs.

Présentée sous forme de confidence, cette biographie non autorisée nous fait découvrir l'homme public et privé au cœur de son quotidien et peut servir de véritable enseignement de l'art de faire des affaires. Malgré sa prodigieuse réussite financière, Pierre Péladeau aurait préféré être un artiste. Celui qui avait commencé sa carrière comme imprésario a fréquenté, aimé, encouragé et financé les artistes toute sa vie.

Père de sept enfants nés de trois unions, il pouvait avoir jusqu'à dix maîtresses à la fois, qui connaissaient et acceptaient toutes l'existence de leurs rivales. Il admira et appuya René Lévesque dans la victoire comme dans la défaite. Ce livre traite aussi de ses relations tumultueuses avec ses premiers enfants, dont Pierre-Karl, qu'il admirait et jalousait à la fois, et de sa découverte tardive des plaisirs de la paternité avec «Petit Jean», le fils que lui donna sa troisième femme. On y relate comment il savait utiliser les talents des autres à leur maximum, dont ceux de Brian Mulroney, ses sentiments contradictoires envers la communauté juive et son engagement profond dans la lutte contre l'alcoolisme, dont il avait lui-même souffert.

Cet homme d'affaires redoutable et redouté a fait de Quebecor le plus grand groupe d'imprimeries du monde. Il croisa le fer avec des colosses comme Robert Maxwell et Conrad Black et terrorisait quiconque osait l'affronter. Selon Bernard Bujold, Pierre Péladeau fut le Don Corleone du Québec, érigeant son pouvoir sur un réseau de faveurs et d'amitiés savamment orchestrées, les crimes en moins, bien sûr.

Son décès prématuré et la course à sa succession ont créé une grande incertitude quant à l'avenir de son empire. Pierre-Karl Péladeau est maintenant à la barre de Quebecor. Qu'advient-il de ce qui constitue l'héritage de l'un des plus grands bâtisseurs du Québec moderne ? Bernard Bujold prend parti sur cette question brûlante d'actualité.



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