

How I became a journalist at the Quebec National Assembly

By Bernard Bujold (1979)



Note from the author

I first wrote the manuscript on the back of sheets of paper on which were printed the transcripts of the debates of the National Assembly. I then rewrote my manuscript a few times to correct it and finally, I had it printed on the copier of the secretariat of the Tribune des journalistes, in 100 copies for private distribution, but also to try to have it published by a real publisher.

I remember in the winter of 1979 that the publisher and founder of Éditions de l'Homme, Jacques Hébert, had invited me to his office in Montreal to discuss a possible publication.

In the end, he decided otherwise, but he encouraged me to continue writing.

It's a small world and I would later meet again, in March 1986, the same Jacques Hébert who was on hunger strike as a senator in Ottawa to protest for the reinstatement of the Katimavik program that the government was proposing to abolish and which he had created. I had become one of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's press secretaries...

The manuscript I am presenting here is the original version as published in 1979. There are several spelling and stylistic errors in the text, but I did not want to correct them in order to reflect the time when I was 22 years old and had no formal education.

If my thinking is naïve and a bit conquering in style, it is because of my age but also because at that time I had succeeded, despite all the obstacles and the lack of means, to join the best journalists of the Quebec Parliamentary Tribune and, for me, nothing was impossible! I was filled with the dream and hope of youth.

I was convinced that nothing, absolutely nothing could stop me. My dream at the time was even to one day replace the star host of Radio-Canada television, Bernard Derome. Obviously, this never happened, but the dream did exist and, in the end, that's what's important, because a life without dreams is no life at all! And sometimes, if we are lucky and destiny is there, our dreams come true!

This book is finally a kind of diary of the thoughts of the young man that I was at the time in the years 1977 to 79.

If I wanted to immortalize it with the internet, it is because this document is the first one that I will have

written and it tells in detail my journey from my childhood to my early twenties.

Today in 2018, far from my 20s, I know well that we do not change the world, but that it is the world that changes and changes us. However, one must have seen time pass to understand this reality.

At the end of the book, a photo album has been added, which illustrates the story of the book. These photos were not published in the original edition.

Enjoy your reading!

Bernard Bujold - February 2018

NOTE:

You can read an online version of this text and view a complete photo album at the following address:

<http://unbelendroitpoumourir.blogspot.ca/2017/12/4-comment-je-suis-devenu-journaliste.html>

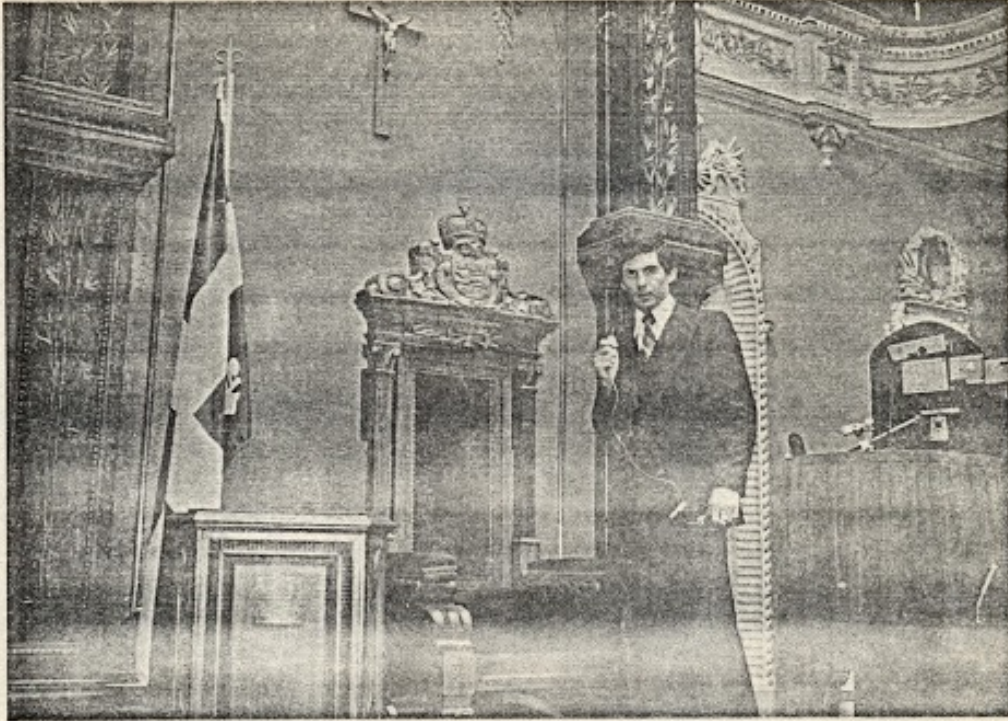




My office at the Quebec Press Gallery where I wrote this book - 1977-79



Archives of the original edition - 1979



COMMENT JE SUIS DEVENU JOURNALISTE A L'ASSEMBLEE
NATIONALE DU QUEBEC ?

...../ page 2

PREFACE

Le journalisme est une bien drôle de discipline. On a dit d'elle que c'était un pouvoir social capable de manipuler un peuple et ses idées et de le pousser à agir dans tel ou tel sens.

On a aussi dit des journalistes qu'ils étaient des bons à rien provenant de diverses couches de la société, le plus souvent mauvaises, et que ces gens faisaient du journalisme parce qu'ils étaient incapables de faire quoi que ce soit d'autre pour gagner honorablement leur vie.

Qu'en est-il vraiment? Je n'en sais encore rien sauf que je me retrouve à peine âgé de plus de 20 ans journaliste à l'Assemblée nationale du Québec avec comme rôle de surveiller et d'interpréter les agissements de politiciens, fonctionnaires et de l'ensemble du gouvernement de la province.

Est-ce que je remplis bien cette tâche? Difficile pour moi de répondre néanmoins selon mes patrons la réponse est oui. Des patrons qui ont à contrôler des médias qui déservent près du million d'auditeurs soit de la radio ou de la télévision.

Ceci est mon histoire et la description de tout le cheminement que j'ai dû suivre pour en arriver à être correspondant parlementaire.

Je désire cependant avant de commencer à vous raconter mon voyage personnel, dédier cet ouvrage à tous les jeunes qui le liront et leur dire qu'encore aujourd'hui il est possible de se réaliser et d'accomplir des choses qui nous semblent d'abord impossibles.

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L'espoir, le travail et surtout le courage d'affronter les obstacles peuvent renverser toutes les difficultés.

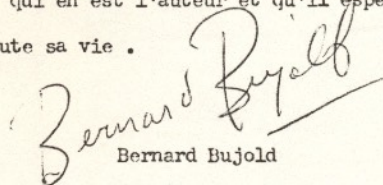
Je m'avancerais même à dire que : " Impossible n'est un mot ... ni Québécois ni Canadien . "

J'ai écrit ce livre pour publication en circuit fermé et de ce fait ceux qui le liront sont en principe de mes amis personnels ou encore des membres de ma propre famille.

Je n'ai donc pas cherché à cacher les faits ou user d'humilité.

Pour la plupart vous connaissez déjà mon histoire mais sans l'envers du décor. Avec cet ouvrage vous verrez par quel moyen précis j'ai pu obtenir tel ou tel succès; succès qui sont en réalité peu importants aux yeux de la grande masse de la population.

Je veux que cet écrit conserve un cachet personnel et à ceux qui auront le privilège d'en recevoir copie je dis : " Conservez-le en souvenir et dites vous bien que c'est un de vos amis qui en est l'auteur et qu'il espère bien vous conserver comme ami durant toute sa vie . "


Bernard Bujold

PREFACE

Journalism is a strange discipline!

It has been described as a social power capable of manipulating people and their ideas into acting in a certain way. It has also been said that journalists are good-for-nothing people from various, mostly bad, strata of society and that these people do journalism because they are unable to do anything else to earn a decent living. What is the truth of this? I don't know yet, except that I find myself, at just over 20 years of age, a journalist at the Quebec National Assembly whose role is to monitor and interpret the actions of politicians, civil servants, and the entire government of the province. How well do I do this job? Difficult for me to answer, but according to my bosses the answer is yes. Bosses have to control media that serve nearly a million listeners either on radio or television. This is my story and the description of the whole path I had to follow to become a parliamentary correspondent. However, before I start telling you about my personal journey, I would like to dedicate this book to all the young people who will read it and tell them that even today it is possible to achieve things that at first seem impossible.

Hope, hard work, and, above all, the courage to face obstacles can turn any difficulty around.

I would even go so far as to say that: "Impossible is not a word, neither in Quebec nor in Canada. "

I wrote this book for publication in a closed circuit and therefore those who will read it are usually my personal friends or members of my own family. I did not try to hide the facts or to be humble. Most of you already know my story but without the backstory. In this book you will see how I have been able to achieve this or that success; successes that are actually of little importance to the great mass of the population. I want this book to have a personal stamp and to those who will have the privilege of receiving a copy, I say: "Keep it as a souvenir and tell yourself that it is a friend of yours who is the author and that he hopes to keep you as a friend during his whole life.

CHAPTER ONE

Family origins

Bernard Bujold was born in the Gaspé Peninsula in Saint-Siméon de Bonaventure, a small village of barely 1500 souls. It is Léonard Bujold, also a Gaspesian of origin, who on June 28, 1956, was able to contemplate the birth of his first son. Two years earlier, in August 1954, he had married Anita Cyr, a young girl from a village located a few miles west of Saint-Siméon, New Richmond, a strongly English-speaking town. The couple would have two more children, boys named André and Raynald, but they would have to wait a few years later in 1961 and 1962. Note that Léonard had already been married to Gemma Poirier, daughter of Benoit Poirier of Bonaventure, but this first wife died in 1952, one year after the marriage, leaving no children of the union.

Léonard Bujold was not an intellectual. He lived well, but modestly, on a rural property that also had farmland which he did not cultivate. He earned his living and that of his family by working for the

almost unique industry of the area, today called Consolidated Bathurst of New Richmond, but at the time it was another group of industrialists who owned it. He did just about every job from lumberjack to labourer to maintenance man, in addition to maintaining his various personal properties.

His wife Anita Cyr was not a very public woman either. She preferred to stay at home and take care of the housekeeping. The couple was a good couple and lived simply like most other families in the neighborhood.

Bernard's childhood took place in this rural environment and was relatively comparable to that of any other boy who came from and lived in Gaspésie. The difference is that in his case his parents followed him very closely and spoiled him a lot. He was their only son, the couple Léonard and Anita were to have their other boys only in 1961 and 62 when the eldest would be 5 years old, and thus like any only child he was overprotected by his parents.

He received his first primary education at the convent of Saint-Siméon which was at that time under the administration of a congregation of Ursuline Sisters. According to the nuns, Bernard had certain abilities, mainly in verbal elocution, which they used during

amateur theater sessions. Apart from oratory, Bernard was quite skilled in the assimilation of the various subjects taught such as French, mathematics, history, religion, etc. He was almost always first in his class.

Almost always at the top of his class, those around him recognized the fact that he was gifted and that he would probably occupy, once he became an adult, some important function.

In his seventh-grade year, Bernard was elected president of his class. Organized in the same way as a universally elected board of directors, the class had appointed a board of directors. The idea was originally conceived by the head of the grade, Sister Angeline Bourdage, who wanted to introduce the older students of the convent to organized social life.

At first, the students were reluctant and very few seemed to really want to get involved in the game. Sister Angeline had explained that the interested parties would have to go through all the stages, i.e. place their name in the running, make their little political speech in a sufficiently convincing way so that the other students would agree to vote in their favor and finally of course there was the official selection vote.

For his part, Bernard had not hesitated to put his name forward and he even put a certain amount of

energy into his speech in which he invited his colleagues to nominate him for president. If they agreed to do so, he promised to help them organize a well-supported group life and made various projects seem interesting. Seeing such a zealous candidate for president and getting directly involved in Sister Angeline's game, some of the other children decided to do the same.

Eventually the position of president was given to Bernard and a leader was appointed for each of the other positions to be filled: secretary, treasurer and advisors.

During his term as class president, our young president took care of the organization of the group's life at school as he had promised. Among other things, he organized, with the help of the Sister in charge, an end-of-year trip where the whole class went on a tour of the Gaspé Peninsula. During the year as such, he had, with the help of the other members of the council, seen to the unfolding of various projects such as the student carnival, the art exhibition workshops as well as various other events of the kind.

In fact, Bernard's attitude during this school year was almost identical to that of the previous six years. He was a studious student and a sort of intellectual leader

for the other children. He was regularly at the top of his class and was fascinated by studying to a greater degree than his classmates.

The atmosphere in which he was brought up may also have favored this behavior, for it must be said that if his family environment was rural and comparable to that of the other children, in his case there was a customary frequentation of the religious world. His mother's sister, Emilia Cyr, was the servant of the parish priest of Saint-Siméon at the time, Canon Alphonse Miville. Strongly involved in the liturgical life of the Gaspé Peninsula, Canon Miville, Mr. Miville as he was known among his friends, liked Bernard. His sister, Louise Miville, who also lived in the presbytery, was not without regard for the young nephew of the servant. All three of them, including Émilie Cyr, spoiled their protégé to the best of their ability and occasionally tried to interest him in religious life. Louise Miville in particular hoped to see him one day enter the clergy and become a priest. This social environment was certainly favorable for Bernard and even if he did not become a village priest, his childhood was marked by it and he kept many lessons for his adult life.

In addition to spoiling him, the Mivilles would often have him over for dinner, at lunchtime during school days, or would use his services to do minor repairs to

the summer cottage, work that was done with the participation of his father Léonard who acted as foreman of the operations. It was even at the Mivilles' that Bernard earned his first real pocket money.

After his seventh year, at the end of the school calendar, important changes in his personality transformed him completely. As he moved from elementary to high school, Bernard gradually began to lose interest in school subjects. He lost interest in leading the group and whatever civics and manners he possessed he used almost overnight, as if he had disowned them. During the three and a half years that he spent in high school, this rejection of social respect became more and more pronounced. For his eighth grade education, he was able to continue to attend the convent in St. Simon, but when it came time for his ninth grade he had to go to Bonaventure, a small village some five miles east of St. Simon, on a daily basis.

This was the time when the government was beginning to centralize the students and the famous polyvalente fashion was approaching. Bernard's grade nine debut was even worse than the previous year. At the end of the calendar, graduation was not granted due to a lack of sufficiently high marks in the

examinations. However, he spent two years at Bonaventure, at the local college, in 1970 and 71.

Of this time he retains a generally pleasant memory even though he was very lonely and largely rejected by the other students. Of course, it must be emphasized that he had become very independent and rarely agreed to collaborate with his teachers. However, he created an almost boundless admiration for his physical education teacher, a certain André Beckrich, on whose personality he tried to have a bit of. This so-called Beckrich of Belgian or Swiss foreign origin had served during the last war as a special commando. This alone was enough to convince Bernard of the abilities of his sports teacher who was truly a master of swimming and who would become in the following years an instructor of national reputation, at least at the level of Quebec, and he mastered the general science of physical education.

In 1972 Bernard went to Caplan, a small village located a few miles west of Saint-Siméon, to continue his high school studies, precisely in grade eleven.

There it was really a disaster. The climate of the C.P.E.S. of Caplan, the school he had to attend, made his cup clearly overflow and at a little less than half of the school calendar he began to realize that he

would fail and would not be able to obtain the graduation. Let us note in passing that this C.P.E.S. was the old regional school of Gaspésie where agriculture was taught as a specialty. Due to the lack of sufficient candidates for the cultivation of the land, the school of agriculture had to be converted into a regular school.

During that year 1972, he became very agitated and could no longer concentrate on the study of the various subjects enrolled in the program. Many of the institution's directors even began to advise him to move towards a less scientific field, a manual trade or simply to spend a few years on the job market in order to gain some practical experience of life. It was also a question of letting adolescence pass and the instincts of rebellion disappear from his personality.

This last hypothesis of the job market seemed to be the most interesting for Bernard, especially since he was now 16 years old, he was starting to want to be independent of parental help and that the need for money really belonged to him and became a kind of necessity, at least according to what he thought. After a few weeks of reflection, he made up his mind. He would drop out of school and start earning a living. The problem now was where to go and what to do? Who would agree to take on this young man who, at

first glance, offered nothing disgusting, but nothing so attractive either?

His family, in this case of school abandonment, had hardly felt any really precise signs of it. As for his father, Leonard, he was convinced that life is learned by living it and he had every intention of letting his sons face this life and see them fend for themselves. Especially since 1967, the family had to resign itself to send André, the one who comes between Bernard and Raynald, to a specialized institute for the deaf, an event that had strongly affected Leonard and Anita who were discouraged by the ordeal that fate was sending them. Leonard had also let his elder son take a bit of a break, at least academically, and he only watched the results from a distance.

For this reason, when he announced his intention to start working, there were practically no negative comments, except of course for the first reactions of the moment. Leonard's main dream for his offspring was future jobs where his sons could be secure and from which they could earn enough money to support a whole family. A civil servant or a commissioner, of which there were already several around him in the Gaspé, would have been a good match for him as a father. As for Anita, like any mother who sees in her son a simple child that she would always like to keep

close to her, she had nothing to say about the present events that she considered normal. At 16, you start to become an adult and if you want to raise a family one day, you have to start working and earning money.

We are talking about a family here, and it is important to understand that the environment and the time in which Bernard lived were rural. Generally, young people got married around 19 or 20 years old. Many settled directly on the spot in Gaspésie and thus ensured the succession of the family. Of course there were a few who went to the big cities, many even, but in those years 72 a good number remained in the places of their origin. Modern ideologies on married life and the revolution in the institute of conventional marriage had not yet appeared in this Gaspé region which is still, in many ways, pubescent and in its growth stage.

The decision was therefore made that the eldest of the family, Léonard Bujold, would abandon his school attendance. The decision was made in March of 1973. He was in grade eleven and he was now sure that he would make it through his current school year. He had not gotten the moon as a job, but his efforts had not been in vain. After meeting with his friends, one of them had advised him to go to the provincial labor office, which was preparing a special project for

which full-time employees were needed, at least for a few months. He went to the government office in question and got one of the jobs. He became responsible for planting tree seedlings. However, let's be clear, being responsible here meant nothing more than being the person who digs a hole with a shovel and then places a tree stem in that hole. Conne would say that this was not a job for a prime minister. The salary offered was about \$115.00 per week and you had to sleep from Monday to Friday directly in the forest in the camps that had been used a few years earlier by the loggers. Despite the lack of genuine interest in such a responsibility, this was a real treat for the growing teenager who was just starting out.



**Photos of primary classes - 1962 (top)
and 1968 (bottom)**



The Coop store in Saint-Siméon - 1974

CHAPTER TWO

Professional beginnings

Although planting young shrubs was relatively rewarding, it was no less hard physically and for Bernard, morally as well.

He had never been an extraordinarily strong child physically. Even though he had been involved in physical training for some time, he could not be called "Jonny Rougeau". Morally, he has always been a solitary individual who does not feel at ease in any group setting. He even displays a certain shyness when it comes to seeing strangers or even people he has known for a long time.

The group atmosphere of the logging camps was not perfect for this lonely young teenager, but that would not stop him from continuing his work.

His father, for his part, was all fired up for this first job, especially since the company responsible for the project was Consolidated Bathurst, the same company for which he also worked. And it was not

surprising on Friday nights, when Bernard returned home, to see Leonard lecture his son on the advantages of work, especially on the importance for a man not to be afraid of effort. Of course, he wanted to begin to show his son that he was getting older every day and that he would soon have to assume his responsibilities as a man.

Obviously the sermons didn't last long because the son would quickly leave, once he had washed up, to conquer possible young girls in his neighborhood to return on Monday morning at first light to his task of "tree planter".

It must be said that this first job was part of a government project to reduce unemployment, so there was nothing continuous about it. So once the contract was over, we found ourselves in early June 1973 and because Bernard had attended school at the beginning of the current school year he was able to get a job as a "student worker" this time for the Quebec Minister of Transport. His new responsibility was to mow the grass on the side of the road. Obviously it was nothing too complicated.

A few weeks later, when the available work period had once again expired, his father got him a job as a commissionaire at a local grocery store, the

Coopérative de Saint-Siméon. He had to place the goods sold in paper bags and then go and drop them off in the customers' cars. It should perhaps be noted that he had already done this job before and for the same grocer on Thursday and Friday nights a few months earlier.

But the last days of summer came quickly and with them the time of the return to school. Bernard went to school and if possible, following his father's advice, he should try to go to a technical field leading to a professional training. A mechanic, for example.

But he had not set foot in this new polyvalent of Bonaventure that everything was negative.

First of all, the atmosphere was, understandably with his solitary temperament, more than bad.

Secondly, he had experienced in the last few months what it is like to have money. He had started to frequent some local discotheques, hotels where there are orchestras. Then there was also a new idea in his mind; that of becoming the owner of a fitness gym.

For the past few months, he had been practicing fitness with various tools that his father had allowed him to set up in the family home as well as in the garage and what he most hoped for was to have his

own gym and to train other individuals commercially. A bit of a "Vic Tanny's" type of studio.

Apart from these daydreams, there was also the local grocery store where, due to the increase in customers, the decision was made to hire an additional employee on a regular basis.

The manager, Gérard Arsenault, had indirectly approached Bernard to take the available job, which did not fail to interest him in a serious and concrete way.

The decision was made on the same night as the start of the school year: he would leave school and work at the Saint-Siméon Cooperative.

According to him, it was preferable to seize the opportunity that was offered to him and work regularly, whereas with the school, there was no guarantee of an advantageous result at the end of the path.

With the Cooperative he was at least certain to receive a regular income.

In all this his father was probably the happiest. Just think, at the age of 17 his son had a regular, full-time job, and better yet, only a few hundred feet from

the family home. His mother, well, she too was happy to see her son sort of settled. However, she seemed to be the only one who could see the future and its reality through these happy events and said, "This is great, it's a good start and then in a year or two you can do something else."

This when even Bernard believed he had found the miracle gold lode that could be exploited for the rest of his life.

Especially since in this period many adults could not find a job. Everyone in the Bujold family was happy and we can say that the weather was good.

However, the situation did not remain like this for long and the first flames of interest soon cooled. Bernard was in charge of displaying prices, putting the products on display so that customers could see the merchandise, packaging the purchases, etc...

In short, a whole host of responsibilities necessary for the proper functioning of a food store.

On the whole, he did his job quite well, which was interesting, at least from the point of view that the work was indoor and not very physically demanding. However, adolescence was beginning to cease its

influence on him and so he began to dream of the future and of other more promising horizons.

On the one hand, there was the hope of one day having his own gym, which still nagged at him, and on the other hand, seeing some of his friends exile themselves to the mining towns of Quebec, Sept-Îles, Schefferville and others, and return with salaries earned in a single week that sometimes reached the one he had earned in two months of work at the famous Coopérative de Saint-Siméon, all of this was choking the young food employee from within.

In June. 1974, it was on the threshold of the store, around 8:30 a.m. and by a beautiful morning sun, that he coldly announced to the manager that he would leave within two weeks. His decision was final and he would be going to Sept-lies in the future to earn his living.

In reality, manager Gérard Arsenault was not surprised. He had realized over the past few months that his new employee, now almost a year old, was dreaming more often than not of projects that were too grand for a simple store employee.

Projects that were probably unattainable, but that was not his problem and if the young man wanted to

dream in color and break his back, he could not help it. He had given him his chance and too bad if he didn't take it.

We must add here the advantage of the Coopérative de Saint-Siméon, which was probably responsible for the general orientation of Bernard's future career. The atmosphere in the food store was very fraternal and for the customers, Bernard was a young man who had a job for the rest of his life, so to speak, and therefore a lucky young man. Customers could regularly be seen chatting with him as well as with the other employees and this was certainly not detrimental to the various meditations of the future parliamentary journalist.

This rural and warm Gaspesian atmosphere was also reflected in the internal work climate and even if we sometimes played tricks on each other, we all liked each other. It was therefore with a tear in his eye that he left his job as a food clerk as well as the work team with whom he had developed a strong friendship, a friendship that would remain with him throughout his life.

But at the time he had just turned 18 and with one of his childhood friends, Michel Bujold, who despite having the same family name had no family ties, they

had both planned a program to board the city of Sept-Îles, boarding at work of course.

And his father, in spite of the first reluctance, had finally supported this idea and people in his family were beginning to firmly believe that the city of Sept-Îles would be an excellent place to continue Bernard's initiation to life.

It was also realized that he would never be a rural man and that he would have to earn his living as a nomad traveling from town to town.

The idea of hosting radio programs had also germinated in Bernard's mind following a trip to Shawinigan to visit one of his uncles when he noticed that the girl his cousin was to marry had a brother who was a television host. As our food clerk was on his annual vacation and he took the opportunity to meditate on his future, it didn't take much for him to say to himself: "If an individual who is the brother of the girl that my cousin is going to marry can make television, why can't I do it too? "

The brother in question is a man named Duquette who works for Trois-Rivières television, but the funny thing is that he never knew the role he played in Bernard's career.

It is with a certain disappointment that he realized that it would be impossible for him to associate with a gym owner in the Mauricie region who had suggested to our young Gaspesian that if he wanted a gym he would first have to work and prove himself a bit more. Bernard promised himself on the other hand to attack this new crush: the radio world, and to create, if not invent the radio in Sept-Iles because of another special characteristic, like many of his friends, Bernard believed he was dealing with a world in full expansion on the North Shore and barely at the age of its colonization.

However, this was not to be the case and even though our potential discoverer would become a presenter for the Sept-Îles radio station, his adventure in the world of communications had only just begun.

Note: The uncle mentioned here is Albert Bujold who married Alice Jobin from Quebec City. The latter is the intellectual of the Elie family and Bernard was strongly inspired by this uncle who was an innovator. One could even say that Bernard is the continuity in the new generation. As for his cousin, it is André Bujold who married Denise Duquette from Shawinigan.



Leonard Bujold - Saint-Siméon de Bonaventure - 1974

CHAPTER THREE

Sept-Iles 1974

Beginning of Journalistic Career

This famous adventure which was to lead to a kind of "Inca" treasure in Quebec was not as miraculous as expected. At least in the first times.

The arrival as such in Sept-Iles in July 1974 was almost historic.

Bernard and his companion Michel boarded a Québécois plane to make the trip from Mont-Joli to Sept-Iles. In addition to the fact that for our two thieves, it was the baptism of the air and that Michel did not seem to take so much the balloting of the plane and that he feared at any moment that this one starts a descent towards the ground; due to the fog the sixteen passengers of the plane had to descend before destination on a landing field of fortune covered with gravel and in full forest in the surroundings of Port-Cartier.

Our valiant pioneers were not mistaken, if we were to believe the first impressions, the North Shore was really in full colonization even in 1974.

If Michel had almost not been able to resist the airplane trip while Bernard was laughing like a teenager in front of a comedy movie, this time it was him who was starting to be prey to a horrible fright.

"Listen Michel, it's awful. We'll go back to the Gaspé right away. You see that it is still at the stage of the Indians. Tomorrow morning, I'm leaving for St-Siméon. And you know, co-op is not that bad. I think I'll go back."

The reasons that mainly motivated Bernard's fears are that between Port-Cartier and Sept-Iles, there is nothing that can attest to the high degree of industrialization that the region and especially cities like Port-Cartier and Sept-Iles have experienced. The nature along Route 138 is still completely untouched and in some places, if the landscapes are really extraordinary they are also really wild.

And as for returning to his grocery store, Bernard saw it as an emergency exit because the manager had let him know that during the next few months if he

wanted to return, the door would be wide open. He would even wait a few weeks before finding a permanent replacement for him.

From Port-Cartier to Sept-Iles, it had been agreed that the company Québécoir would pay the cost of transportation by cab to the city center. During this trip, Michel, who was quietly recovering from his flight, had also regained his composure and it was with encouragement that he reassured his companion:

"Well, listen, I know someone in Sept-Iles. Before getting discouraged, let's wait until we get there. Since the time I've been hearing about the North Shore and its beautiful jobs, let's see if it's true.

It should be added here that indeed several of Bernard and Michel's friends were supposed to work in Sept-Iles and the surrounding area and that several other people from St-Siméon had assured the two exiles that according to them the North Shore was welcoming and that employment was readily available there.

Finally, after the two-hour drive from Port-Cartier to Sept-Iles, they arrived in the promised city.

In the end it wasn't so bad except that now the fears were transferred to the other side of the coin. Now the city was much too urban and where would they find employment, these young Gaspesians who had just left their local town? At first glance, there were only a few mobile homes, commercial buildings and various skyscrapers scattered around.

Nevertheless, our two colonial soldiers settled down for a first night's stay at a hotel that turned out to be the worst in the city, at least in terms of reputation. However, the comfort level was acceptable. (It is understandable that the precise name is not mentioned here)

One of the interesting anecdotes that Bernard likes to tell is that of the "Topless" dancers, an anecdote related to this hotel. Michel and Bernard were lying in their room and discussing things. But what a surprise it was to hear perpetual music playing on the first floor of the hotel and not to be able to fall asleep before the early hours of the morning, around 2:30 a.m., time when the mysterious music stopped.

The next day it was Bernard who was the first to go and pay the bill for the first night's stay and to say that the double room would be kept for another night, asking the owner:

« Listen, Sir, your room is not bad but the music! Couldn't you ask us to turn it down a little? Me and my colleague couldn't sleep all night."

The hotelier replied almost immediately to his two disgruntled young customers:

"Ah yes, the music! Well, these are my dancers. It's a show - you know there are six a day. You should come to see this. They're topless dancers you know young girls who take their clothes off... "

Surely our two young visitors would come and see this thing. Even they were the first ones to be seated around 4 o'clock in the afternoon waiting for the first show to be presented at 5 o'clock. Their joy was even greater when they learned that the famous dancer was staying in the room next to theirs. Unfortunately, in spite of the numerous plans of attack and attempts of our Valentinos they could not succeed in putting the grapple on him. What do you want? Error of youth persists to say Bernard.

But more serious tasks were waiting for them, so the search for a job turned out to be a rather difficult task.

How could the others get hired by the mining companies? After having filled out job applications with the companies, it was only fair to conclude that

in two months all activities would have ceased on the North Shore. No job available for them and this at each of the companies where they had gone to apply.

We were now almost a week into our stay in the iron capital and nothing had really worked out as planned. Bernard and Michel had moved into an apartment in the city center. According to them it would be easier to wait and especially less expensive than in a hotel.

Temporarily, the husband of a cousin of Bernard's who lived in Sept-Iles had managed to find a job as a janitor for each of the two newcomers, but at a ridiculous salary and the job was only for a few hours a week.

Other than that, the situation was really dramatic.

The return to the Gaspé would be soon unless an unexpected miracle occurred. But Bernard, who had arrived there with ideas of grandeur, began to bring them out during these gloomy days.

Recovering from his first emotions, he gradually regained his natural form. The idea of the radio also resurfaced and it is a bit like the fox in the fable who studies the lion before going to engage in conversation with him that he looked and inquired

about the situation of this radio in Sept-Iles. Then he decided that he would go and offer his services to the management of the radio station the next morning at first light.

In the meantime, during that same afternoon of scholarly reflection, while our two researchers had searched the city in vain in search of a job, they were calmly resting while sipping a beer in a café-restaurant located right next to the Sept-Iles radio station, Le Venise.

Sitting next to them were two other individuals who, strangely enough, were carrying a portable radio that they seemed to be listening to religiously. After listening to their conversation for a few minutes, there is no doubt that these two people work for the radio station whose building is located right next to the restaurant where they are all.

That's all it took for our valiant Bernard to strike up a conversation and ask about their exact job inside that radio "station".

"Excuse me, sir, do you work for the Sept-Iles radio station?"

-Yes! Yes!

"It's funny because I come from the Gaspé and I'm here to work in radio. You see, I want to offer my services as an announcer. So tell me, in your opinion, what is the best way to approach management, especially since I am a beginner in the business?"

The two employees of CKCN radio were, among others, Jean-Philippe Perretti, today employed by Radio-Canada in Moncton, New Brunswick, and Bernard Gendron, today an electronic technician for a private company on the North Shore.

While finishing their respective drinks and continuing the discussion, Jean-Philippe Perretti, who was a presenter at this radio station, ended up advising Bernard to offer his services as an on-air operator instead. That would be a great place to start and there was nothing to stop him from aiming for something else once he was in the box.

Perretti's colleague supported this advice and pointed out that the station, which had just been moved into its new building, was currently in a running-in period. So the director needed a few operators to test the new formula, old in larger boxes but new for radio stations like this one, an announcer responsible only for the animation and an operator for the on-air.

Normally, in most stations, the announcer is responsible for both the on-air presentation and the animation. In Sept-Iles, the management of CKCN radio decided to split the on-air and the production. The operator had the task of broadcasting at the scheduled time such as such a recording prepared in advance on tape.

This was the kind of responsibility Bernard had to ask of the radio station management.

Bernard was quick to offer his services. It was to the general manager at the time, a certain Raymond Perreault, that he presented himself to make his first direct attack. The latter, warm and welcoming; relations were not always to remain so between Bernard and him, admitted that the idea that was proposed to him was excellent but added:

"Radio operator is not a man's job. Here we hire mostly women or students for this task. The reason is that the budget for this service is not so high, so the wages paid are not so extraordinary. About sixty dollars a week. It's a great source of second income but not a living. Look, get a job in the city and then come back to me. As soon as you get something you

call me and you can consider yourself a Sept-Iles radio operator."

Bernard was very happy with these kind statements and did not fail to mention the possibility for him to be a presenter for this same station one day. A day that meant as soon as possible.

Again, the director, Raymond Perreault, was not negative and reassured him that it happened often. Individuals would come in for a voice test and if the result was acceptable then the candidate was hired. In this case, he emphasized that we could talk about it again in the next few weeks, but that the important thing was to find a job elsewhere in the city on a regular basis. After that, we could work out a collaboration plan according to the availability of each one as much for animation as for broadcasting.

Bernard was crazy as a broom. Just think, the director of the radio had received him in his office and had even closed the door for more privacy. Then, far from being negative to the offers, he had admitted that they fully met his current needs.

In the evening, he proudly told his friend Michel, who didn't believe him and told him to be careful, that maybe the director had simply made fun of him.

Come on, thought Bernard, how could anyone have such ideas? The station manager was such a warm and polite guy.

Of course, he had rounded the corners and interpreted the interview to his advantage, but the station manager really needed staff.

In small stations, there is a high turnover of employees and you have to be able to fill the gaps quickly. Bernard's offer was like that of any newcomer to radio, a bit delusional but who isn't? And when the time came to cool down our young "Henri Bergeron" in power, it would not be difficult and it would only be necessary to dot some i's.

In the world of radio, we often have our feet on the ground, but we also have to be daring, almost dangerously so, in order to obtain good results.

If there is one field where routine has no place, it is the world of radio and television. Inside, the director must have known this too.

The famous job that would allow him to enter Sept-Iles radio was not an easy thing to get. There was a janitor's job, of course, but the hours were evenings

and nights, the very time when our radio director planned to use our newcomer.

We had to wait about two weeks before he was able to tell the CKCN boss that he had a regular job with a daytime schedule. He was a regular salesman for ROCO Inc. a firm specializing in the sale of construction materials to the private sector, including local mining companies. Iron Ore of Canada, Wabush Mines, Rayonnier Quebec, etc.

Now we could seriously discuss the Bujold-CKCN association. However, in reality the job at ROCO Inc. was not obtained with folded hands. It was with his cousin, Louisa Bujold, and her husband, Jean-Claude St-Onge, that he had finally agreed to apply for a position with this merchant.

Louisa Bujold is the daughter of Germain Bujold, Leonard's brother, who married Fernande Bergeron.

From the outside the building was not so comforting and there was also the fact that the perpetual embarrassment, which is characteristic for Bernard in front of new events, was not totally absent. Whenever he has to do things he is not used to, he always wonders if he has gone a little too far and if he will be expelled.

However, once inside the building, he had regained his confidence and it was with energy and enthusiasm that he tried to sell his salad to the manager of this sales firm.

The manager in question, Mr. Elysé Lanteigne, took him a little pity and, as if he saw in him one of his sons, he undertook to integrate him into the company. He told him to wait a few days to plan things but that there was a good possibility that he would be hired.

Four days later, almost totally discouraged, Bernard heard the doorbell ring. He was asked to come and answer the phone at the reception desk because he had a call. Surprised, he went to the reception and was even more surprised to hear the director of Roco Inc. with whom he had spoken a few days earlier, tell him that he had been hired.

Not knowing how to thank his new boss, he stammered a thousand thanks and then went back to his apartment to wait for the return of Michel, who had found a job as a welder a few days earlier, a very lucrative position.

The director of CKCN, Raymond Perreault, again warmly welcomed our new hardware salesman and

he began as promised to establish a possible work schedule as an on-air operator.

As for the announcer thing, well, he had frankly pointed out that for the moment we had other things to worry about and that it was better to wait a while.

It was therefore decided that Bernard would be an operator during the hours of 6 a.m. to midnight and that on Thursdays and Fridays when he was held up at the hardware store, he would be compensated by Saturdays and Sundays. In all a period of responsibility of 30 hours of broadcasting per week.

Obviously, the full work schedule was becoming burdensome, but he was confident that he would have no problem keeping up.

Indeed, everything went relatively well. He started at 8:30 in the morning as a salesman at Roco Inc. and in the evening after 5:30 he went directly to the station to keep the broadcast going until midnight.

The anecdote that recalls this time and that Bernard likes to tell is that of the "water jar".

It is understandable that after finishing his shift at midnight, he was not so much asleep since for a

human being the most difficult hours to stay awake are those between 9 am and midnight. Also in the evening it was not uncommon to see our radio operator storming into the apartment and making a racket in front of his friend Michel's bedroom. When this one did not wake up, our knight of the night took care of it by opening the door of the room and by tipping directly the mattress of Michel on the floor. The latter, ejected from his bed, would wake up all surprised believing he was having a horrible nightmare.

As soon as he came to his senses, Bernard said to him with candor: "Michel, what would you think of going for a little beer to pass the time? "

Poor Michel could not believe his ears or his eyes. He had to get up at five o'clock in the morning to go to work in his welding shop, but now he was woken up at one o'clock in the morning. Really, if he hadn't known the intruder, he would have thrown him out the apartment window.

But on a good night, Michel set out to catch our troublemaker in his own trap. With the help of wire and a margarine container, he installed a system that would normally cause water to fall on whoever opened the bedroom door from the outside. Proud of

his invention, Michel went to bed that night with his soul at peace and convinced that if he was dragged out of his sleep at least he would have a good laugh.

Unfortunately for him, the system did not work as planned and when Bernard arrived and noticed that the bedroom door seemed to resist opening, he thought that it was only a chair placed in front of it that prevented it from opening. He immediately undertook to open it by force because he said to himself that it was necessary to wake up the individual lying in this room because every evening it had become the golden rule of the establishment. After a few presses, the door not only unlocked but also came off its hinges and fell to the floor without the shower system working. Michel was once again awakened from his sleep but Bernard had not been punished.

Needless to say, when they saw all the paraphernalia hanging from the ceiling, and especially when they saw how the events had turned out, our two friends took the thing in stride and went to have a midnight beer that evening.

In the meantime, a vacancy was going to be created at the radio station where the newsreader responsible for the evening and weekend bulletins had just left.

Bernard, who had befriended the news director, a certain Réal-Jean Couture, undertook to win him over and convince him to take on this responsibility.

Bernard saw an opportunity to become the anchor he had originally planned to be. The general manager, however, did not see it the same way and was not convinced that Bernard was the man he needed and categorically refused to give him the responsibility of newsreader.

Our on-air operator had only been at the station for a month, having been hired at the end of July and now in early September, and that was not enough time to have made a judgment on his general personality.

However, while this director was out of town on business and Bernard had totally won over the news director, Réal-Jean-Couture, this person in charge decided to entrust the narration of the current weekend's news bulletins to his new friend.

After two or three bulletins, Réal-Jean Couture, very proud of his prodigy, congratulated him and assured him that on Monday morning he would go and announce to the general manager that the evening and weekend newsreader had been found and that his name was Bernard Bujold.

During that Saturday afternoon, our two comrades could be seen driving around the city in their respective cars in search of information on a supposed demonstration by the local Indian reserves.

It is worth mentioning that Bernard had bought a car, a 1969 Ford Marauder, a luxury model that was obviously a few years old.

But the exuberance of the weekend was not to last long and what a surprise it was for Bernard on Monday morning to receive a call from the general manager of the radio station and to hear the latter yelling at him at the other end of the line. He was expecting congratulations and was waiting for this call to confirm his commitment as a news reader. He was wondering which saint to turn to.

"Are you crazy, C... who is the boss here? Who gave you permission to read news on the weekend while I was out of town?"

Bernard, all disconcerted, tried in vain to explain that it was the director of information who had given him this permission and that he had promised that the position would be given to him permanently.

The director, Raymond Perreault, was quick to deny the alleged promises of his chief reporter and continued to lecture him on the serious crime, in his words, that his overly enterprising on-air operator had just committed.

White as a sheet, Bernard hung up the camera and tried to resume his work as a hardware salesman.

Having somewhat regained his composure and following the encouragement and advice of his co-workers in the store, he decided that he would not remain humiliated. He would resign from CKCN Radio as a sound operator.

So he called the manager back and said:

"Mr. Perreault, I no longer work for you. I didn't like your attitude and I want you to know that I'm not a person who can be thrown around like a ball. Find yourself another operator because for me CKCN is M...."

Perhaps more surprised than Bernard at the first call from his boss, the latter remained speechless in front of this surprise statement contenting himself to say that it was okay and that he accepted the departure of his supernumerary employee.

In the meantime, our news reader for a day had seen the news director again as a friend and told him in detail about the latest events. Disappointed by Bernard's latest move, he invited him to reconsider his resignation and promised that he would make things right.

"Listen to me, give me until tomorrow. I'll talk to Raymond Perreault and I swear to you that I will make things right. You will be my news reader, I promise you.

With these encouraging words, Bernard decided to accept especially since inside he was beginning to regret having acted a little impulsively. He would have liked to return to the radio station and especially to become the news anchor. So he returned in the hope that Réal-Jean-Couture would really fix things and indeed things did get fixed.

No one knows exactly how, but eventually, Raymond Perreault agreed to let Bernard return to the station and was even willing to allow Bernard to take a voice test to replace the necessary newsreader. The test in question was the simulated narration of a short two-minute news bulletin that had to be recorded on tape. He passed easily, at least according to Réal-Jean

Couture's comments, and our young Gaspesian then became, at the beginning of October 1974, at the age of 18, the official newsreader of the CKCN radio during the evening and weekend schedules.

At the time, he had some very personal characteristics. One of them was the way he pronounced his name: Bernard Bujolde and by pressing the last syllable of Bujold he pronounced: "olde".

Another peculiarity was his Acadian accent, which did not show up during his on-air readings, but he spoke fluently with this accent in his voice, as the Edith Butlers do.

However, nothing at all came out during the narration of short stories because he had found a method that by forcing his voice gave an almost neutral sound to his diction.

Bernard was really happy and probably even happier because he now had a responsibility that no one in his family had ever had before except perhaps Geneviève Bujold, a film star with whom he had family ties but indirect descent.

He was very proud as a Gaspesian to have gone beyond the limits and to have become partially a radio presenter.

Everything will be fine in the best of worlds until February of the following year, some five months later. On the one hand, the job he had at Roco Inc. was in a way contractual. In the sense that at the time of his hiring, the director, Elysé Lanteigne, had warned him that the company would close its doors in February. Thus, work could only be assured for the few months preceding the February closure.

With the arrival of that day, he also saw the scenario of last summer when he had to look for a job and the memory of the many doors closing in front of him also resurfaced.

Nevertheless this time he would have more chances on his side because the work of these last months had allowed him to meet many people of the business world and they had all promised to help him to start again to the work plan. Several had even made concrete job offers.

But when you are young, you have to learn and this initiation is often expensive.

Most of the job offers made to Bernard came from the life insurance industry. Bernard's verve and interpersonal skills were of great interest to many brokers who were convinced that he would make an excellent salesperson in their organization.

Unfortunately for him, not everything was so simple. Bernard's need for security when faced with a new situation or new people was the primary cause of his problems. The simple fact that the salary of an insurance salesman is conditioned by the number of sales made and that the weekly pay is never fixed worried our young job seeker so much that he finally decided to accept the least attractive of the offers he had received but also by far the safest. He became a salesman for a car parts company. It was a branch manager of an American company, United Auto Parts, better known as U.A.P., who offered him the job. This manager, a man named Robert Lavoie, had met our friend by chance at the hardware store and had openly proposed that he become one of the salesmen on his team.

The reassuring and actually undemanding aspect of the offer had seduced Bernard who accepted it a few days later.

And his father, who continued to guide his son from a distance, was one of the first to advise him against getting involved in the world of life insurance.

According to him, there was nothing good about it and his son should look at the more financially solid side of the established sales business. Auto parts were fully within the scope of his plans and he did not hesitate for a moment to push into the arms of this Robert Lavoie, manager of U.A.P. in Sept-Îles.

Bernard would never regret a decision as much as this one. And curiously enough, he would remain employed by this company for more than a year, pondering his unfortunate fate and having all the trouble in the world to get out of the straitjacket he had created for himself. The job as a salesman for U.A.P. was a total failure mainly because he was too preoccupied with the idea of climbing the ladder of the radio world.

But the worst part came when the manager of CKCN told him that the station management had decided to terminate his services as a newsreader.

The reasons? There were none in particular, except that changes had been made in the overall programming.

What disappointed our unfortunate budding journalist even more was that there was no indication of such a move. A few days earlier, the same Raymond Perreault had talked to him about the possibility of becoming a regular presenter, an idea to which Bernard had attached himself and which he had been lulling in his mind because in his job as a salesman everything was going wrong. And now, without warning, he was told that the responsibility he held most dear was simply taken away from him.

The world could not have ended more tragically.

In reality, however, such a move could have been foreseen. First of all, for some time Bernard had been experiencing problems with his voice, mainly with his vocal cords, not so much with his Acadian accent but rather with his biology. It was not so much his Acadian accent but rather biological problems. He had difficulty placing the intonations on the right level of resonance and often some of the words spoken were inaudible.

We can also assume that Raymond Perreault had not forgotten the spat he had had with him a few months earlier and if he had agreed at the time to take him back on the team, it is surely because there was one or more unknown reasons related to the famous

meeting between Couture and himself, Raymond Perreault.

At the same time as his dismissal from CKCN, exactly on February 9, 1975, the situation was getting worse and worse at U.A.P. and the manager Robert Lavoie finally had to admit to his young salesman that according to him, he was not made for the work in the car parts industry.

Her lack of interest was too obvious and he advised her to find another job that would better suit her personal goals as well as those of the company. Why not go back to school," he suggested, adding:

"If you're interested in radio, man, why don't you go? Surely there must be schools that teach this kind of work."

"And you know what's important in life is to do what you love. It's obvious you don't like it here. It's not your fault you're made that way."

But the unfortunate events were too fast for Bernard's ability to resist. Seeing all the calamities coming down on him, he clung to this last job as a salesman and undertook to show that he was interested in this responsibility in the automobile. He used the excuse

of the various problems that beset him and promised that in the future he would put a little more heart into his work.

The manager agreed to give him another chance and allowed him to remain on his sales team. However, during the following months, even if he had succeeded in satisfying the management of U.A.P. as a salesman, his soul was not there and will never be there during the rest of his stay at this company. Our young martyr of the radio will meditate on his bad fortune and will look for a miraculous solution. A solution that will come, but very slowly and with great difficulty.

Bernard gradually recovered from his emotions and started his sports training again, mainly at the Sept-Iles municipal gym.

As the weeks went by, he also regained confidence in himself, and in his mind, future projects began to surface. Soon he would force his fate again and succeed in getting a job in organized sports as a physical education coach. This would be his stepping stone as he desperately tried to find out why the jinx had hit him for the past few months.

He eventually figured it out. If he ever wanted to succeed in life and get through the obstacles of this one, he would have to learn to get rid of this feeling of fear in front of the challenges and he would have to be able to go headlong sometimes. There was no place on this earth for those who are afraid to dare in front of the unexpected.

He would make this sentence his basic principle.





Bernard Bujold and his father at CKCN Sept-Île - 1975

CHAPTER FOUR

Fitness Instructor and Chronicles

SportSanté

It was in June 1975, at a time when Bernard Bujold was meditating on his situation and trying to analyze it, that the destiny he would have to fulfill less than three years later by becoming a parliamentary journalist at the National Assembly of Quebec took shape in a more visible form.

A destiny that had been in the making for some time, but which, like all heavy destinies, would have to undergo a life initiation at a more than accelerated pace, and would often be presented before its end.

His job as a salesman at U.A.P. allowed him to have several moments of free time. He did not waste these periods and tried by all means to straighten the boat for which he was responsible and tried to find, even in this city of Sept-Îles, people who would accept to give him another chance in the professional world and if possible in the radio world.

Indirectly, he would get this chance from a local promoter, Guy Marcheterre, president and owner of a local advertising agency.

But before that, he would have to return to the world of sports where he had excelled a few years earlier as a participant; in particular as a boxer (this pugilist career never went beyond the amateur stage, because Bernard himself finally realized that it could be dangerous for him to push his participation in this sport too far, given his rather average physical constitution.)

This time he would be a sports trainer.

For a few months he had been training almost daily with weights in the company of other employees of the City of Sept-Îles and he became very close friends with an animator from the Service des Loisirs, a certain Laurent Imbeault. The two of them agreed on the definition of sports principles and had also created a mutual respect. Bernard finally confided to Laurent one day that he didn't like his job as a salesman at U.A.P. This responsibility of selling junk cars made him sullen and as soon as he could find something else, he wouldn't hesitate for a moment and he would make the jump.

It must be said that by the standards of the automotive market, the parts sold by U.A.P. were of

excellent quality, but for Bernard it was all the same and he considered it to be junk.

One of the areas where he would have liked to distribute his professional services was organized sports. He wondered if he was not destined for a career in recreation and if he would not end up becoming the gym owner he had thought of becoming a few years earlier. So he had no hesitation in pointing out to his new friend that if he could find him any responsibility within the Recreation Department, that he would accept it immediately. The position offered did not have to be a director's position. Anything would do, and once he was in place he would soon demonstrate his ability and potential in organized sports.

An opening was indeed available, in fact many were, but in many cases the responsibilities to be filled were unpaid tasks. However, a position for an athletic trainer specializing in weightlifting was on the list of hiring needs in order to be able to carry out a new program in the Municipal Recreation Department's activity calendar. Work for which some form of remuneration was granted.

Laurent whispered to Bernard, "I think I have something for you. Responsible for a group of young

people to train them to compete in weightlifting. Are you interested? "

He was certainly interested. However, there was a problem. He had some experience in weight training, but weightlifting was different. This discipline consists of lifting a weight above one's shoulders. The weight is fixed on a bar and the one who lifts the heaviest weight wins the competition. Often the weights reached are between 400 and 500 pounds.

Poor Bernard, who weighed only about 125 pounds, wondered if he would not be ridiculed in this new role.

Nothing better to know than to try and see what it was like.

Nevertheless, he prepared himself well for this new task and on the following Monday he contacted the Weider companies with whom he had kept some contact and asked them to send him all the available documentation on weightlifting. In addition, he spent the evenings leading up to the curtain call with his new students, leafing through and studying a number of books on the mysterious discipline of weightlifting.

The famous night of truth was finally a success. The group of supposedly strong men was composed of about twenty young teenagers with a reassuring physique and no resemblance to that of an "ice-cream cabinet".

The participants who had registered for this activity had done so more out of curiosity or to pass the time than anything else. Bernard could therefore confidently begin explaining the supposedly secret principles of the mysterious weight lifter.

His interpersonal skills and ease of contact were not a handicap when approaching the participants. He even occasionally used his Acadian accent, which amused the group.

These young amateur athletes saw him as a normal trainer and had no questions about his physical size or previous qualifications. They themselves were only 15 or 16 years old on average.

Many even became good friends with him. He was a bit more aggressive about this friendship when he realized that several of his students had sisters who were quite attractive and also seemed to have interesting personalities!

"You have to make the most of your friends," he often told his students.

There were no major problems in this weightlifting class. Prof. Bujold had done his homework and with his personal experience in amateur sports, he was able to organize a course program that followed well and that would lead to a basic mastery of this discipline. The experience was so successful that our expert decided to expand the scope of the program in a very important way.

The idea came to Bernard during a day off when he had spent the morning at his apartment, in order to put some order in the house which was beginning to look more like a boat in distress than a boarding house. Let's add that his friend Michel had moved into his own apartment a few months earlier, which meant that Bernard had to take care of this large apartment on his own, which he had started to occupy as soon as he arrived in Sept-Îles.

As he listened absent-mindedly to his television set, he paused for a moment to catch his breath. The program being broadcast was a series on food with the well-known host Juliette Huot. She was hosting guests and experimenting with various recipes that, according to the reaction of the participants, must be

excellent to taste. Suddenly Bernard had the shocking idea, which would later turn out to be really interesting, that the hosting of columns on weightlifting could just as well be done as he was doing on food, columns that he was currently seeing on his small screen.

We could even broaden the scope of the program and extend it not only to weightlifting, but to the whole field of sports by making scientific comparisons. This research could be presented in the form of a daily program. The idea seemed interesting and worth trying to realize.

Back at work the next day, he hurried to contact a local publicist whom he knew was affiliated with a radio station in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. The latter was to regularly find clients willing to advertise their products on the radio station in question.

Bernard did not know this publicist personally, but he used his sales skills to break the first ice. He didn't beat around the bush and proposed his project of radio programs on sports directly to the agency director, a certain Guy Marcheterre, then president of Publinord. He submitted the idea by presenting the content of the eventual program as being the result of research on organized sports and physical health. He

envisioned a series of ten or fifteen programs, each four or five minutes long, produced and hosted by Bernard Bujold, a fitness expert and former newsreader for the local radio station.

He even added that if a sponsor could be found to pay for the broadcast, he would not personally demand any percentage for the production.

The manager of the advertising agency, a small agency which, while being very functional and providing its owner with attractive revenues, had only one salesperson in addition to Mr. Marcheterre himself and a secretary who acted as a telephone operator and was responsible for correspondence.

The manager gladly accepted the proposal, or at least the general idea, but he also wanted to take advantage of it. He suggested to Bernard that he let the project sit for a few days at the most, to allow him to find a sponsor who would pay for the broadcast.

The two men agreed to meet again in the next few days, three or four at the most, and that in the meantime they would each work on their own to find a charitable financier.

No one knows if our advertising magnate was diligent in his search for a sponsor for the program, or even if he really took the idea seriously, but Bernard put all his efforts into finding the necessary merchant. Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version)

It was September 1975 and since his services had been more than appreciated during the weightlifting sessions, Laurent Imbault had asked him if he would be interested in taking on the role of fitness instructor during the next session of the Municipal Recreation Department. The group of students this time would be adults and the subject would be indoor jogging.

Each season, there were many participants in this activity and over the years, the City's management had to divide the participants into two different groups. One group would come to train at six o'clock in the morning and the other would take over an hour later at seven. During these sixty minutes, under the direction of an instructor, twenty or so men and women would undergo a complete physical conditioning session ranging from various stretching exercises to running for the last ten minutes.

Bernard gladly accepted such a responsibility, especially since he was usually a real physical

education teacher or an individual highly qualified in a health discipline.

The year before, it was a man named Denis Aurey, a career physiotherapist who had left his work in health to take on the management of the Sept-Îles arenas. It was therefore quite an honor for Bernard to take on the position of sports coach. And if our young Gaspesian had no real training in physical education, he did have a good knowledge of physical activity, being himself a fitness enthusiast, and he wasted no time in developing a complete and well-structured program where participants were subjected to various beneficial exercises.

Presumably, everything would be fine. However, our young teacher would not have to take care of the animation of this course alone.

In conjunction with the Adult Education Department of the Sept-Îles School Board, the Recreation Department had decided to offer only one morning jogging class. It was decided to partner with each other and present the program in one location. Bernard would be coached by a teacher from the school administration who was a highly qualified physical education teacher after many years of study at the university and for whom the respect of principles was not the least important. For him,

physical activity should be the responsibility of people coming out of universities and one could not pretend to master the sports techniques by a single direct contact even if the individual put the best will in the world or was gifted with the most beautiful possible aptitudes.

However, our scholar accepted, willingly or not, Bernard's presence and even went so far as to give him friendly advice and guidance during the first contacts with the group.

The two colleagues shared the schedule and it was decided that he, Hermel St-Amand, would take care of the first session, the six o'clock, and that Bernard would have the seven o'clock.

Everything went very well. It must be said that once the rhythm of the first session was obtained, the presentation of the others was a piece of cake.

Bernard saw it as a form of animation and to have to support the participation of a group for a whole hour only added to his interest and increased his knowledge in the art of public communications and indirectly in radio, which he had not forgotten.

During these sessions he once again befriended a businessman who was the owner of a subsidiary of

Canadian Tires Corporation which was located in Sept-Îles. This individual had enrolled in a fitness class to get back in shape. The latter, a certain Jeffrey Frenette, got along well with Bernard, but he did not overflow with a simple friendly hello or a how are you doing?

Nevertheless our salesman did not leave things there. He took care of Mr. Frenette personally and even more so when he saw in him the possibility of a financier for his sports program. Why didn't he take advantage of this opportunity and combine the useful with the necessary. A Canadian Tire store, like most merchants, needs direct advertising. It would be easy for the store manager to direct some of his advertising to the sports program and it wouldn't cost him any extra money in the end.

One morning our young friend made up his mind and told the manager of Canadian Tires directly that he had an interesting offer for him. He had a local broadcasting project in mind and the station that was willing to broadcast it wanted a sponsor. Since his store was already a customer of the station, he said he thought Canadian Tire could be the financier. The manager was not negative. He even agreed to meet with the salesman from the advertising agency, Guy Marcheterre's, and if we could agree on the costs, he

would agree to support the program project monetarily. At least that's what he suggested.

The Canadian Tire manager and the agency manager did come to an agreement, but it was slightly different from what Bernard had envisioned. The original plan was for the series to be produced free of charge. The sponsor would only have to pay for the broadcast costs in exchange for advertising. The agreement that was officially concluded stipulated that the series, instead of being of ten or fifteen programs, would be unlimited, at least for an initial period of six months and then the contract was renewable, and the most interesting part of the whole affair; it was decided to grant a remuneration to encourage the young producer in his work.

The latter was of course very happy with the turn of events and it is certainly not him who would complain about the fact that he was granted a form of remuneration for this work. It must be said that the remuneration was not very high, but it underlined the professional side of his activities in organized sports and radio.

It was then decided that the series would be called "Sport Santé". The broadcast time was set for seven forty-five in the morning, an excellent time if one

takes into account the arrival at work of workers or office employees. The duration of each column should be one minute and at most two minutes. It would be broadcast daily from Monday to Friday.

The first presentations of Sport Santé on Sainte-Anne des Monts radio were quite successful, although it took a while to get the hang of it. The main problems were in the sound production which was not very faithfully reproduced. Bernard was using a personal tape recorder which was probably not of good quality, because after he got a new one, the tone problems almost disappeared.

It is perhaps important to underline that the radio programs were prepared and recorded in advance on magnetic reels. Generally, about 30 programs were recorded on a single reel, which allowed for better planning by CJMC technicians. Apart from the slight technical problems at the beginning, everything went well.

Bernard was really proud of himself, because he had once again forced his fate and succeeded in bringing one of his personal ideas to fruition. The question was, how far would this success go? However, it was clear that he had the wind in his sails and decided to take advantage of it. He thought that if you could

produce a program for one station, you could just as easily produce the same program for several stations. He therefore had the idea of presenting his project to various radio station managers located throughout the province, as well as those in the Montreal, Trois-Rivières, Quebec City and Gaspé regions. He sent tests on cassettes where two or three chronicles were recorded. He proposed, in a letter accompanying the sending, to produce for the station a complete series of sports chronicles and in exchange he asked for a small remuneration calculated by the act, that is to say a cost for each of the chronicles. In all, about ten stations were contacted.

Inwardly, even if he dreamed a little about the success of this enterprise, our scientific narrator told himself that no one would be willing to take it. The results will not be totally positive, but not negative either. However, he would have to wait to be aware of it and he would have many adventures before seeing his column broadcast by several media in the province.

A few months after this success at the Sainte-Anne des Monts radio station, and while he was still skilfully presenting fitness classes for adults in the morning, he crowned his work by leaving his position as a salesman at U.A.P. to become one of the people

in charge of the arenas for the city of Sept-Îles. An important responsibility, but one that will not come without problems. It is another unexpected idea that will allow him to open the doors of this employer, the City of Sept-Îles, and to occupy a job that would provide him with some additional means to climb a few more steps in the world of communications that he had only partially brushed with his fingers, but with whom, the great love seemed to have been created from the first meeting.



The author and the recording of his radio column in Sept-Île - 1975

CHAPTER FIVE

Administrator of the arenas of Sept-Iles

Bernard Bujold became assistant manager of the Sept-Îles arenas on November 22, 1975, at the age of 19.

He was 19 years old and would hold this new position for a full year.

The real responsibility he had obtained was that of a clerk. He had to see to the technical preparation of the ticket sales process, to the accounting of it, to the supervision of the work of the maintenance workers, although he did not give them any direct orders, everything had to go through the general supervisor.

His main tasks also included the administrative reception of arena users and the publicity of certain activities presented in the amphitheatres.

Bernard was under the direct orders of the general supervisor of the arenas; a certain Denis Auray. He

first met Auray when he was browsing the city's indoor rinks. To stretch his legs, he had put on skates and was throwing a few pucks on the boards. Then he spotted a small man, barely more than five feet tall, who had stopped to chat with two of the employees responsible for maintaining the ice surface.

Obviously he was their boss. The hurried appearance of this individual had seduced Bernard, who couldn't help but dream of the happiness that this guy could have had when he was in charge of the two magnificent amphitheatres in this city. How pleasant and useful it must have been to be able to follow up on his personal initiative on the operation of these facilities.

To be always immersed in this sporting atmosphere that has something of bewitching especially when one walks in the stands. Just as it can be pleasant to be in the middle of an arena when it's crowded, there are also incomparable sensations when you walk around with completely empty seats.

Bernard felt all of this and in a few minutes he projected it in his mind. Things stayed that way until one day when he returned to his job as a salesman at the auto parts company and had to serve a buyer who in his spare time was involved in organized field hockey in Sept-Îles. The whole arena landscape

resurfaced in his mind. A little later, their conversation indirectly dealt with the availability of training facilities for young field hockey players in the area and without a doubt, both he and the buyer took more pleasure in talking about sports than in haggling over sales prices.

A few hours after their meeting Bernard had an idea that he found interesting at times and that he could even compare to those he often had and that were concretely realized in various projects. Once again this flash of ingenuity would be useful and would improve his personal situation. However, as with previous times, the end result would not be quite the same as originally envisioned.

In many cities during the summer season some field hockey professionals participate as instructors in courses called "Summer Ice Hockey Schools". The young field hockey players of the visited area sign up for these sessions for a period of one or two weeks during which they are subjected to different types of exercises to improve their field hockey techniques and their general ability to perform on an ice surface. Participants pay a fee of approximately \$100.00 per week, which includes both the cost of board and the right to participate in the activities.

Needless to say, for the organizers of such sessions, there are a few dollars to be made.

Bernard thought that it would be possible to present such sessions in a city like Sept-Îles. None were currently scheduled and it was precisely this point that led him to believe that he could simply innovate in this matter and launch the first of its kind for the young field hockey players of the region.

Financially he would benefit, but more importantly he would be able to soak in the atmosphere of organized sport for a good two weeks, in addition to the long periods of preparation that this would have required and where he would have rubbed shoulders with various experts in professional field hockey. And it was becoming increasingly clear that during these pre-presentation preparations, the friendships he would make and the new contacts he would establish could serve him well in finding a professional responsibility that better suited his aspirations than the main job he was currently doing, a salesman, which he still did not like.

He began to plan a possible plan for the summer field hockey clinic. It was early fall, October 1975, but there was no reason not to start planning for the next summer.

He knew that the bigger and more difficult an event is, the longer the preparation must be if it is to be successful.

After having summarily established a kind of outline, he decided to contact this famous director of the arenas with whom he had never had the opportunity to speak. It was by telephone that he made his first approach. He told him about his involvement in sports with his Sport-Santé column and his work as a physical educator, and then he told him that he had a project in mind that might interest him.

Both he and the person he was talking to, as the director of the arenas, could benefit financially and socially.

He finally described the whole idea to him as the organization of a summer ice hockey school.

The person in charge of the arenas was very interested and even went so far as to invite Bernard to come and meet him alone to discuss the project more seriously. The place he considered ideal was his own home where it would be quiet and far from eavesdroppers.

Bernard agreed and supported the idea of a meeting at the director's home. This residential location would be a much better place to deliberate on the proposed idea than the hectic offices of the sports complex. The meeting was scheduled for a few days later in the early evening after everyone's work hours.

One thing he hadn't mentioned in his approach, which was responsible for his increased interest in field hockey in recent months, was that last June when the arena director position was vacant and the city had put out notices for new candidates, he hadn't hesitated for a moment to put his name in the running, even though he was more or less convinced. He was only 18 years old, it was the beginning of June and Bernard, born on June 28, had not yet reached his 19th birthday, and most of the other candidates who had applied were all highly experienced business people who were 35 to 40 years old.

The caliber was really above his height, but no matter, he decided to play his cards right, knowing that bold ideas sometimes lead to great concrete achievements. Unfortunately, this time luck was not on his side and despite the warm welcome from the municipal administration, Bernard understood their decision when they said they admired the courage and audacity of their young candidate, but the city's

two arenas used budgets of more than \$500,000 per year and that, considering this point, they needed an individual with strong skills and experience in public administration.

However, nothing prevented our friend from applying for another job, perhaps less demanding, and he was even invited to submit his name for the next job competition. For the moment, there was no specific position to be filled, but who knows, maybe in the near future there will be one. This is what the general manager of the recreation department, Mr. Norbert Lévesque, who was retiring at the end of 1978, had suggested.

It was the end of October 1975 and the famous evening set for the Auray-Bujold meeting finally arrived. Armed with his blind confidence and a ten-page explanatory file on the whole idea that he had vaguely presented to him by telephone, Bernard went to Denis Auray's home. The latter was very warm and invited his visitor to come to his basement after having kindly introduced him to his wife and children. He had three children at the time, two boys and a girl, Martine Auray, with whom Bernard would later become very good friends. It was even her on one occasion who arranged the meeting of another

girl who was a friend of Martine's and for whom he showed a certain interest.

After the presentation, both Bernard and Denis Auray, went to the basement, the retreat of the sports director, where he had displayed a lot of souvenirs on his past exploits and on various moments that were particularly important to him. A few rows of books also lined one wall. It should be noted that Bernard was and still is an avid reader, which is very useful for him to obtain the various responsibilities he is entrusted with or simply to come up with the ideas that get him interesting positions.

He and the athletic director then sat down with a beer and chatted vaguely about things for a few minutes before getting down to business.

"Look, Mr. Auray, the thing I'm here for is, in my opinion and that of some of my colleagues, a sound monetary idea. This field hockey school can be realized and I have all the technical details here on paper."

Our two anis then began to study the few documents to criticize them each in turn. Denis Auray seemed to be pleasantly surprised by the content of the idea, especially since several technical points explained in

the file were truly in line with the reality existing in the world of organized field hockey. He was even more surprised when Bernard, who had somewhat overstepped the mark, pointed out to his host that last June he had been one of his opponents in the fight for the position of arena supervisor.

"Despite his young age, the individual in front of him must have had some potential," he thought inwardly.

The idea of the field hockey school was a good one and could bring in profits. However, it was without counting the company: École moderne de field hockey, which presented this type of training course annually and took over many of the stars of professional field hockey.

Gaston Marcotte was one of the innovators. In addition, their experience in the field allowed them to present internships in several large cities in the province without a big financial risk for the promoters of the host city. Bernard's individual project, while lucrative in the end, required a significant start-up fund of at least \$5,000.00. And that's where things got complicated.

Financially speaking, finding \$5,000.00 is not a difficult task, but risking it on a start-up organization

is another story. Denis Auray pointed out the danger of gambling away a large amount of money, especially since he himself had only just started his job as director. Later on, in a year or two, we could better evaluate the degree of real risk by considering, among other things, the interest of young people for field hockey, but for the moment it was better to hesitate before putting the whole machine in motion. However, Auray had another proposal to make. The minor field hockey season was fast approaching, remember that it was October 1975, and he would probably need a kind of assistant to carry out his task as supervisor. An individual who would work in conjunction with two other employees, one responsible for minor field hockey and the other for the administration of the arenas in terms of paperwork. The third position that needed to be filled was that of technical administration where the individual in charge would have to assist the supervisor in some way in the operation and presentation of sports activities. Both the technical side of the facilities and the public relations side.

If the first two positions were held by women, the last one should be held by a man who better corresponds to the image of a responsible person in this area, at least the image that the municipal administration wanted to project. Note that the two female

administrators in question are Jocelyne Deschênes for the minor field hockey sector and Ursula Michellaud responsible for administration.

Denis Auray approached Bernard on this subject and asked him, just as directly as he had been approached for the field hockey school, if he would be interested in such a position. The salary was interesting, there were many benefits and of course the responsibility was full time throughout the year.

Almost afraid to wake up from a dream, Bernard tried to imagine the reality of such a job. Just think, the person in question would be in the sports atmosphere all day long and there would certainly be no lack of contact with the public.

Surely the offer interested him and he did not linger long in his thoughts before agreeing. As soon as he was invited to take up his duties, he would be ready to come. Denis Auray suggested that he wait a few days before resigning from U.A.P. He assured him, however, that the position was practically in the bag and that all that was needed to begin filling it was to plan the hiring process and present the candidate to the Director of Personnel for the City of Sept-Îles.

The interview ended on this encouraging note for Bernard who had come hoping to sell a more or less serious project and who was leaving with a concrete proposal for a full-time job in organized sport. It was really a good evening and even though the interview lasted almost four hours, it could not be said that this time was wasted.

Nobody will ever know if Denis Auray really wanted to discuss the field hockey school project. Even Aurey himself will never lift the veil on this subject. And several things tend to create a mystery around this job offer. First of all, a few months earlier, when Bernard was one of the candidates for the position of arena director, the city's bosses were very impressed by the enthusiasm of their young candidate. They even advised him at the end of the interview to come back and apply for another position that was less demanding. In addition, he had made friends with a director of the recreation department in recent weeks. As he continued to teach adult fitness classes in the mornings, a certain Henri Roy, assistant director for the sports department, had been greatly impressed by his ability to teach sports. Especially since the young teacher had no specific training in this field.

At one point, Henri Roy even talked about the Sport-Santé program that was broadcast in Sainte-Anne des Monts and commented on it with praise.

It is these two events in particular that suggest that Denis Auray would have agreed to meet with Bernard specifically to offer him a position and that the whole scenario had been planned in advance. The field hockey school would then have presented itself as an unexpected opportunity and Auray would not have missed the chance to mix the fish and bring him into the territory of the municipal administration by pretending to be interested in the internship project.

Some time later, Denis Auray himself will admit that it is possible that things happened according to this description, but it is equally possible that it was not the case. He left the suspense entirely present. It wasn't long before our car parts salesman received a call from his new friend, the arena manager, telling him that the deal was done. All he had to do was resign from U.A.P. and move into his new office.

This day was one of the great moments of joy in the life of this Gaspesian. He was able to give up what had been his jinx for more than a year and as a result of his efforts he could finally do a job that he would fully enjoy. He was the host of his Sport-Santé

column and he continued to lead fitness classes for adults. Now he would become an arena administrator. It was truly a great day and Bernard, a bit superstitious by nature and attached to a form of fetishism, saw this as the beginning of a personal journey that would make him happy for years to come.

His responsibility at the arenas went as planned and the various tasks corresponded in all points to what Denis Auray had suggested. He started working in the arenas on November 22, 1975, at the age of 19. He remained there until August 1976.

During the time he spent there, he made several personal contacts, but what he focused on most was to establish himself as a journalist and to increase his competence in this field.

His position in the recreation department gave him a good deal of freedom in the mornings; arena hours were generally from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. When there were events on the weekend, the administrators went to work, but were given corresponding days off during the regular week. Bernard used these days and mornings to the fullest to research his sports columns and also began to add a form of regional journalism where he commented on current events as such.

In this regard, it was the director of the advertising agency sponsoring Sport-Santé who suggested to his occasional collaborator that he take care of researching news of local interest in the Sept-Îles, Port-Cartier, Hâvre Saint-Pierre and surrounding areas, and send the results directly to the radio station CJMC. For this work, a remuneration was offered which became very interesting.

By being given this responsibility Bernard could also ask for his accreditation to the Cercle de presse de Sept-Îles which he soon did. One of the moments he remembers from this period when he was starting out in journalism is when he was directly opposed to his former news director at the CKCN station, who could not see a former employee collaborating with a competing station. CJMC was a direct competitor of CKCN in Sept-Iles.

Bernard's position in the recreation department was one of choice, at least to get the front page of sports news. He was also not shy about using his opportunities and whenever the opportunity arose he was ahead of the other journalists in the region and announced fresh news that no one had been able to get before him and that in many cases was very interesting news.

The print journalists did not take much notice of this situation, especially since, because they only published once a week, the printing delays prevented them from covering the information in a truly complete manner. However, Réal-Jean-Couture from Electronics had not taken the same point of view and it is finally in the middle of the street when he crossed Bernard by chance in front of the city hall that he accosted him on this subject. He had not spoken to him since he had thanked him for his services a year earlier.

He asked him straightforwardly why and for what purpose he had begun to collaborate with a radio station that was CKCN's competitor? Why had he left Sept-Îles radio aside? The local station deserved to get the collaboration of the citizens of the area, even more so when they are employees of the municipality.

The few sports information that could come out of the activities taking place in the amphitheatres had to be communicated to the local station before any other media. Otherwise, it was a case of dishonesty.

Bernard then tried to make it clear that his role at the arenas and his role as an occasional radio reporter

were two completely separate positions. He also stressed to his former journalism godfather that nothing, and especially not someone named Réal-Jean-Couture, could prevent him as an individual from being the reporter for CJMC.

CKCN had fired him more than a year ago, and now they had to bite the bullet if this former employee was competing with them.

Couture stormed out of the office with a dark red face and promised that things would certainly not end there. We would see what kind of wood he was using and that this young Gaspesian would see that people from the city were not attacked in this way. He swore on his honor.

Réal-Jean Couture did mainly take steps on the side of the local administration. At least if we are to believe the comments that Bernard obtained afterwards from various of his bosses.

He supposedly pointed out to them that a municipal employee paid with the taxes of the citizens had to collaborate with the organizations of this same locality. CKCN was paying a large amount of taxes for the city every year, but more importantly, this

local radio station would occasionally announce the different sports activities of the city.

Activities of the socio-cultural or simply recreational kind. If some employees of the city of Sept-11es started to compete with CKCN and put obstacles in its wheels, then the existing collaboration between the two organizations would simply be cut off and the recreation department would have to go elsewhere to advertise its activities.

These facts did not fall on deaf ears and our venerable Seville journalist was promised that the matter would be settled within hours.

"Employee Bernard Bujold would cease all radio activity or simply quit his position at the arenas." This was the assurance they had given without further formalities.

It was Denis Auray who approached Bernard on this matter. On the one hand, he was the one who had officially brought the offending employee into the system and, in any case, the employee was under his direct orders. The city administration had therefore entrusted him with the delicate mission of announcing it to the employee.

He didn't beat around the bush and, as was his habit, he told Bernard openly why he had insisted on seeing him alone that afternoon.

"Listen, old man, Couture, your journalist friend, called me.

Bernard did not let him say another word and pointed out that this Couture was not his "boyfriend". A journalist perhaps, but no form of friendship existed between them...

He didn't give his boss any time to continue and started to tell him about the fight of the last few days with this Couture in question. He also explained to his supervisor that it was obvious that his job at the arenas and his job as an amateur journalist for CJMC were two totally different things. He was not, as far as he knew, a political employee of the city since he was a union member, so his off-duty activities were his own business. After letting him speak for a good ten minutes, Denis Auray took the floor again, a little happy not to have to tackle the subject of the discussion that had just been put on the table.

He said to his protégé: "Bernard, this is precisely why I wanted to see you this afternoon. Your story with Couture has reached them. They are adamant; you

quit your radio show or you quit the recreation department. "

Bernard, who was trying to digest these orders, wanted to point out that at the very least his Sport Santé columns would keep him in the field he loved as much as sports, and that in the end it was a half-bad thing.

"It is all your radio activities that I want you to give up. As much your Sport-Health business as the rest.

Denis Aurey added that he liked Bernard; the latter did his work well and showed a lot of interest. However, Bernard had to give up his radio activities because they were causing political problems for the city administration. He personally sided with his employee, but circumstances forced him to ask him to make a sacrifice for the general good of the city organization.

Bernard had fallen back in his seat. He looked as if he were lifeless, so pale had he become. He who had fought so hard to build up what little journalistic and radio assets he had was now being taken away just as the thing itself was beginning to get interesting. The gods could not be so cruel, no matter who they were.

No, he must have been dreaming. He left his boss with these facts and asked to think for twenty-four hours. Tomorrow he would come back with a final answer on the decision he would make. To give up radio or sports, how difficult it was to choose between them.

It was as if he had to say which of the people between his brother and sister he agreed to send to the scaffold.

Twice since his arrival in Sept-Îles he had been really discouraged and so to speak "stunned" by the circumstances. The first time was at the very beginning of his settlement there. Around the same time that he had received confirmation of his engagement at Roco Inc. In the two days that preceded the announcement of this news, he had literally broken down and felt totally lost in this new city that was Sept-Îles and whose doors to the job market refused to open. As if by a miracle, however, things had settled down with his hiring as a hardware store salesman.

The second time he felt more discouraged than normal was when he was told that he had been fired or thanked by the radio station CKCN. He felt very down and wondered what god was holding a grudge

against him to test him on all sides at the same time. We remember that almost at the same time he was out of work when Roco Inc. closed and that he did not like his new job as a salesman at U.A.P. putting all his hope in his occasional job at CKCN as a news reader.

This time, the third one marked by an ordeal whose date he would remember, Bernard was even more upset than before. If he had lost a loved one, the pain would not have been greater. Sport-Santé was like his own child, he had thought of it and created it with his own hands. And his role as a journalist at CJMC was a natural extension of that original work. How could fate take away from him what he had barely known and had worked so hard to bring to life?

That evening in his bed, alone with his sorrow, before falling asleep for the first time since he had become a man, he cried his eyes out. If a god existed he would ask for a miracle. A miracle or the inspiration to choose. Giving up his position at the arenas would have meant the need for another livelihood, as his radio activities were not bringing in enough income to support himself. Moreover, he enjoyed his role in sports immensely. It was not uncommon for him to come into a lecture hall or his office and ask his boss if he needed any services when it was normally his

day off. The hours he spent in the sports complexes were like hours spent at home. It was as if he had fallen in love with arenas. However, giving up his radio work was simply impossible. Especially since he had just tried to expand his broadcasting territory in the last few weeks, and the deal was practically closed for at least one other station.

Finally, with these thoughts, he decided to wait until the next morning and forget everything for the night to come. This last night before the almost human sacrifice would perhaps bring advice and the famous miracle solution, which no matter how one looked at the facts seemed impossible, would present itself upon awakening.

This is exactly what happened and the night really brought a miracle. In the afternoon, after his interview with Denis Auray, Bernard went directly to his radio boss and also the director of the advertising agency, Guy Marcheterre. He had explained to him what was happening and had suggested that he had to make a decision for the next day. Most likely, he would give up his radio work as he did not have the means nor the desire to give up his work in arenas. He did not fail to underline his great sorrow and especially the fact that a great political plot was behind it all. If Bernard was a young newcomer,

barely nine years old, in the sometimes cruel world of radio and public relations, Guy Marcheterre was not at all. In his forties, he had a long track record and the company he ran in a very profitable way demonstrated his business skills and the existence of his defense possibilities when he was attacked. He was a fundamentally good and honest guy, but with the claws of a lion ready to tear everything apart if his property was attacked. He therefore took the attacks against Bernard as if they were made against him and set out from the start of his journalistic collaborator to see what was really behind the whole story.

If Réal-Jean Couture seemed to have some support at city hall, Guy Marcheterre really did. The fight was political, so we would use politics. One must know how to attack fire with fire and that is what he did. Marcheterre stressed to his contacts in the municipal administration that such manipulation of the individual could not be accepted. Bernard Bujold was a city employee, but could he be prevented from spending his free time according to his own tastes? Especially since the fact of practicing a certain form of journalism was in no way incriminating. Bernard had not done anything wrong. He was simply reporting the news. This was a democratic country and no one in the city government or anyone else

could accept that a young man trying to do the right thing should have his work completely destroyed by a dispute between two competing radio stations.

In his eyes, the city leaders who had ordered Bernard to cease his radio activities had acted with the worst kind of cowardice behind their backs. Finally, he concluded that if the threat was pushed to the limit and Bernard Bujold was forced to abandon one of his current activities, and it was also true that his name was Guy Marcheterre, he promised to sue the responsible leaders so much that they would be so ashamed that they would never again participate in public life. Between lions of the same size, we understood each other well.

No one really knows what happened afterwards in response to Guy Marcheterre's comments, except that the next morning, at the right time, the day Bernard had to give his answer to his superiors' orders, he received a phone call from his boss who simply told him to ignore the previous day's meeting. He had just received a counter-order to forget the whole affair and to act as if nothing had happened.

The chance had thus turned and the impossible miracle had occurred. He would go back to his

normal job and try, as suggested by his boss, to forget everything about the case.

Of course, he would never be able to do that and even years later he would still have that unfortunate moment in mind, but it was one of those experiences that form a man and make him as resistant as a rock in the face of modern life, where almost every man becomes a wolf in front of his environment, whether he likes it or not.

Nevertheless, he liked his task at the arenas and he was now sure that no one would come to bother him for his personal activities because if some had for them the strength and the experience, he had protectors who would prevent that dishonesty be committed against his person.

Over the next few months, in addition to working in the arenas, Bernard would give a new boost to his Sport Santé series. He would succeed in expanding the broadcasting territory and thus gradually become a more and more genuine journalist. It will be remembered that a few months before his misadventure with the news director of CKCN, he had sent offers to different stations so that they would accept to broadcast his show in exchange for a certain remuneration. No results had been felt since then, but

they would happen soon. However, it would be in an indirect and unplanned way. These results would occur at about the same time as his run-ins with city officials and the CKCN story.

One of the stations to which he had submitted his idea for a show was New Carlisle's CHNC. He's from there, with St. Simons only a few miles west, and he knows the area and its possibilities very well. While on a trip with his family over Christmas in 1975, he undertook, not very confidently, to go directly to the CHNC station to see what was happening with the offer he had made a few months earlier.

One noon he told his father that he was planning to go to New York to see friends and to deal with a business matter he had in mind. No one in his family had asked for more, for it was becoming clear in the last few months that the elder of the family, once a mere teenager, had now become something of a businessman, if not successful, then at least on the way to being so.

Indeed, since his first successes at the Sept-Îles radio station, his first commitment at the beginning, then his involvement in the administration of arenas and finally his work as a fitness instructor, all this had created a form of respect towards him.

If he had been able to succeed, without any schooling, in occupying positions usually reserved for graduates of the grandes écoles, thus achieving something almost impossible, one could no longer say: "Bernard will not be able to do it".

Any idea coming from him had now all the chances of success no matter the kind or the form of the idea as such.

This was actually a bit of an exaggeration and showed, once again, that parents are always blind to the real possibilities of their children.

Our sports program salesman didn't beat around the bush with the CHNC director. He introduced himself directly and began his plea to the then general manager, a man named Arthurt Houde. He told him that he had come to talk business. "Mr. Houde, my name is Bernard Bujold. "I am a physical education teacher, responsible for the Sept-Îles arenas and I produce the Sport Santé series. You may already be familiar with this series, as I recently sent you recordings of it. If I am here it is to offer you to buy programs from this series. "

The station manager listened wordlessly to the speech, which lasted a good fifteen minutes. The

presentation had been made in the purest style of the salesman and our young friend had put all his enthusiasm and heart into convincing the good old Mr. Houde, who was initially known by many for not doing anyone any favors and as a very tough person, to buy some Sport-Santé columns and thus allow the broadcasting territory to be expanded.

This son of the founder of the Gaspesian radio; it is indeed the father of Arthur Houde who was the first to implant the radio waves in Gaspésie. Charles-Eugène Houde founded CHNC in 1933 while he later founded on October 17, 1959 the television of the Gaspé CHAU-TV which is still today the only one to serve the vast territory of the Baie-des-Chaleurs, but which belongs now to Claude Pratte and associates a little the Randolph Hearst of Quebec.

Arthur Houde may have had an idea in mind, but he did not categorically refuse Bernard's proposals.

"It's a good idea. You told me you were from Saint-Siméon, right? I'll tell you what. I'll try a few. Let's say the contract is open-ended, except that I have the option of ending it when I see fit. If your show is good then great if not then well we'll stop working together. Okay?"

Bernard silently let out a sigh of relief like someone who has just fought hard to save something dear to him and realizes that he has succeeded in his mission.

He was both happy and surprised. At last, the broadcasting territory of his program Sport Santé was expanding and now covered all of Eastern Quebec, as well as the northern part near Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and the Baie-des-Chaleurs region, plus northern New Brunswick. Finally, there was the North Shore region near Sept-Îles, because we must not forget that CJMC is very well represented in the Sept-Îles area. This is largely due to the geographical arrangements. As strange as it may seem, the radio station in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, which is poorly received in Matane despite the fact that the distance between the two cities is barely more than fifty miles, is received perfectly in Sept-Îles, which is located much further away. This is caused by the presence of the St. Lawrence River which, since there are no differences in level, mountains or other, allows the waves to travel easily.

Bernard Bujold was on the road to success, or so it was believed in his immediate circle and he thought so too. However, he himself saw in this other addition, that of CHNC, another reason to rejoice.

In his eyes it was the most important of all. If he had had the opportunity to hold the airwaves for a few months at the Sept-Îles radio station and a little later to take them over at Sainte-Anne des Monts, only his father, on the occasion of a short friendly trip to the North Shore, had been able to hear the concrete result of this radio success.

All the friends of his village, the employees of the cooperative of Saint-Siméon, his former classmates and finally all his family, nobody in these people had had the opportunity to notice his success and to admire his performances on air. Now, with CHNC, it was going to be possible and our child from Gaspésie did not want to miss this first and he would do everything to shine on this occasion.

This reasoning is somewhat normal and it is like for any young person who succeeds; he is always proud to come back to his hometown and to be able to tell himself that he has done them all proud, generally also, and as it was the case for Bernard, the people of the region are proud of the successes of their members and do not fail to underline it when the opportunity arises. In addition, his Sport Santé program would be broadcast every morning after the religious column of Abbé Boisseault who, for all

Gaspésians, is a voice that is many years old and is part of the "furniture of the Gaspé". It was again quite an honor for our young journalist in the making.

Sport-Santé was broadcasted on the Sainte-Anne des Monts and New Carlisle radio stations, an imposing territory was now covered. Nevertheless, the host of this series could not stop working elsewhere and only deal with the realization of the chronicles. The few dollars he earned from this job were barely enough to pay for his weekend entertainment, but why would he stop working at the arenas anyway, since he loved it. It was a complete life that he knew every day in the fulfillment of his responsibilities and nothing could induce him to want to leave this place of work, the arenas of Sept-Îles.

A few months later, even though it would not increase his earnings in the artistic world, he thought of selling his column to Carleton television and the general manager at the time, Yvon Chouinard, accepted the idea. However, he will modify it from the conception it had for radio broadcasting.

This time for television, the columns would last five or six minutes and would be broadcast only one day a week instead of daily as on the radio. The director of CHAU TV asked Bernard to prepare texts for some

thirty-nine different programs and invited him to come and record them during the summer so that we could start broadcasting them the following September at the beginning of the new fall programming.

It was then around May 1976, the beginning of a new summer.

He immediately set to work and wrote the thirty-nine presentations on as many different topics. Sometimes he talked about the advantages of running, sometimes about the dangers and techniques of boxing, and suddenly he explained what heart failure was.

The formula resembled that of the popularization programs presented by certain networks, notably those hosted by Fernand Séguin. The explanations and details given by Bernard were far from false. He used the same methods as when he had to transform himself into a weightlifting teacher and he documented himself wherever possible. Scientific books, radio or television programs that he heard or saw, meetings with experts in the field, nothing could stop him in his search for themes or ideas for his public program. At CHAU-TV, this was the consecration of the Sport-Santé project.

Unfortunately, it was also the turning point of his life.

Indeed, for the Gaspé television, the broadcasting of the Sport Santé chronicles would only take place in 1976 and after the summer season.

In the meantime, the author would be subjected to hard trials that he never suspected would come his way.

If the events of the last few years, the Couture-Bujold confrontation, his involvement in the sales market, the sports field and the various occupations he held there, were all very formative for his character, the summer of 1976 would be for Bernard the apotheosis of this difficult and cruel training.

While he would lead his career in the arenas and in the world of information, he would see this empire melt away just as it was beginning to show signs of strength. This time, however, our son of Acadia would be used to misfortune and he would be better able to face fate and try to start over from almost nothing to restore what had been his in the recent past.



Bernard Bujold - Sept-Île - 1976

CHAPTER SIX

Death of Bernard Bujold's father

By May 1976, everything seemed to be going well, and Bernard was pretty close to what we call "happiness".

Life in Sert-Iles was pleasant, and he had many friends both personally and professionally. He had a job he was proud of, and could afford to let his imagination run wild in his journalistic columns and reports. He had no intention of changing anything in his life other than to improve on what was already there.

Expand Sport Santé's distribution territory. Find other occasional responsibilities in the journalistic world; however, he didn't want anything on a permanent basis, as he didn't consider journalism to be a sufficiently rewarding field for an adult; and finally, in the not-too-distant future, he hoped to climb a few more steps in the municipal administration hierarchy, and who knows: maybe one day be the big boss of Sept-Îles arenas. One of

the arenas was called Le Palais des Sports and the other Aréna de Participation, a name apparently due to the fact that the building was erected thanks to special contributions collected from the local population.

The first signs of the decline of the Bernard Bujold empire, or in other words, the time when various problems in his personal life would alter the general direction of his career, came one evening in May 1976.

He was busy registering youngsters for the amateur baseball teams to be organized by the Service Municipal des Loisirs for the coming season. As his colleague Jocelyne Deschênes arrived to replace him, she pointed out that the boss, Denis Auray, wanted to see him in his office immediately. Both playful and worried, Bernard wondered why his boss wanted to see him right away. If Jocelyne was to be believed, it was urgent.

"Oh, perhaps a pay rise," he said aloud, to lighten the mood a little. Then, without waiting, he headed for the other amphitheater, Le Palais des Sports, where the administration offices were located.

Denis Auray greeted him warmly, as was his wont, but this time with something deeper in his voice, as he had done on a few occasions when events were really serious. The Couture affair, for example. Bernard thought inwardly: "There must be something I've done that's not right. "

"Sit down, old man, listen, stay calm. I just got a call from your aunt in Gaspésie. She wants you to call her back. It seems your father is in hospital. But don't worry, take it easy."

Bernard, who had always been very optimistic by nature, tried to comfort his boss and friend Auray, who seemed horribly disappointed to see his employee's father in hospital.

"AH! Well, it's not serious. He warned me last week during our weekly phone call. He's got some kind of stomach ache. But it's not serious, it must be the temperature or the water. With a few pills everything will go away. "

With those words, he headed for his personal office to make a phone call home to Gaspésie, to confirm his version of events. Curiously enough, his mother, who answered on the other end of the line, said

hello only briefly, and without further information, when Bernard asked about his father, she hastened to put him through to the famous aunt who had supposedly contacted his boss a few minutes earlier.

She asked the usual questions about her nephew, how he was doing, and so on. It had been well over a year since she'd last spoken to him, as the opportunity hadn't arisen, but she didn't linger as long as she normally would on these banalities.

"Listen, Bernard! Don't get upset, but your father's gone to hospital. But you've got time to go down to Gaspésie to see him."

"How can I go down to Gaspésie!" thought Bernard.

He had just pointed out to his boss that it wasn't that bad that his worst was hospitalized. It was just a few digestive problems. So he set out once again to explain this fact to his visibly worried aunt.

"Listen, Auntie, it's nothing serious. He's had a few digestive problems, but that's normal. It's the temperature or the water"

Her aunt interrupted to tell her that, on the contrary, it was very serious. The doctors were all adamant that Léonard Bujold would be dead within a few weeks. He had generalized cancer of the intestines. He had been operated on, but immediately on seeing the advanced state of the disease, the opening was closed, as no treatment was feasible. Touching it would only have aggravated the case and accelerated its progression. In their opinion, this man could live for a few more months or a few more weeks. It was a question of progression and the patient's own attitude.

On hearing all this news from his aunt, Bernard still stubbornly tried to convince her that her concerns about his father were unfounded.

But as she reaffirmed that his father really was living out his final hours, and momentarily stopped talking, Bernard let out one last sentence before hanging up the phone:

"It's okay, I'll be there tonight."

He hadn't even waited for his aunt, Lucie Bujold, to advise him to be careful and not to drive too fast before he'd left on the line.

This Aunt Lucie is the direct sister of Geneviève Bujold's mother, Lorette Cavanagh. The two sisters each married a Bujold, Firmin and Raymond in Lucie's case, but the two Bujolds are not related, despite sharing the same surname. The connection exists on the Cavanagh side. Another Cavanagh sister, Thérèse, also married a Bujold. Léopold Bujold was the brother of Lucie's husband Raymond. So Lorette, Lucie, and Thérèse, the three sisters, were married into the Bujold family. Geneviève Bujold's real first name is Nicole.

Bernard was as if frozen and not a gesture left his body, then suddenly pale and with jerky movements he headed for his boss's office and told him in a few words pronounced with sobs at the back of his throat:

"I'm leaving immediately for Gaspésie. My worst is dead."

Just as he had half-opened the office door and was about to leave, Denis Auray stood up and, with a gentle but firm gesture, held him by the arm:

"Wait a minute. Stay calm. I know what it's like. I've already lost my father too. Wait, I'll help you. "

To this Bernard replied that he didn't need anything except for someone to take the necessary steps so that he could be considered ill during his absence. Denis Auray insisted, however, and after assuring him that his job would in no way be jeopardized during his absence, he continued to argue the importance of taking events calmly. He knew that his employee had a habit of driving very fast, and often dared a little too much. Letting him go without calming him down a bit could have been dangerous, and the risk of a car accident, possibly fatal, would have been very high.

He particularly remembered the previous Christmas, when Bernard had left the office party in the wee hours of the morning and, after driving back a young girl he'd met at the party, had immediately set off for Baie-Comeau despite the bad weather and his physical state affected by fatigue and alcohol.

At the time, Denis had tried to restrain him and prevent him from leaving by being both gentle and violent, but to no avail. Bernard had finally left during the night to catch the morning ferry from Baie-Copeau to Matane. All went well, but it was a close call. Just a few miles from Sept-Îles after setting off, his car swerved and ended up in the

ditch, unable to move. Fortunately, a passing truck pulled Bernard's car out of the ditch, and he was able to slow down a little and make it to Baie-Comeau without further incident.

However, this time, even though the weather was milder, Denis really feared for his employee, for if previously there had been no feeling for him, today it was quite the opposite. And a car accident that would have seriously injured Bernard would have further aggravated the situation in which the father was living out his final hours.

Finally, he managed to calm him down and even offered him some money so that he could leave the next morning, but very early before the banks opened.

A little calmer, and after a few moments' discussion with Denis, Bernard decided to leave in the evening anyway, but he promised his manager to be very careful and not to worry too much. After all, if his father died, there was nothing he could do about it.

For Bernard, his father was everything. He was God, he was life, he was practically himself, and he thought and lived only for and through his father. Everything he did, he did in some way to honor

him, and nothing could warm his heart more than to see his father proud of him. The idea that one day his father would leave had never crossed his mind, and whenever someone would or could talk him into thinking that, it didn't take long for him to convince them otherwise.

For him, his father was immortal.

Even in this case, when he had finally agreed to rush down to the Gaspé to see his father in hospital, he still didn't fully believe that the tragic moment had arrived. He was confident that his father would recover and that he would once again make it through the ordeal.

He must have had some kind of complex about identifying with and believing in his father. Psychologists would easily pigeonhole him, but he himself felt happy and strong when he thought of his father. What difference could knowing about his complex and destroying it have made? Certainly nothing better, and it could even be argued that it was this blind belief in the magical strength he believed he could obtain from his father, even from a distance, that enabled him to sometimes dare without common sense. Daring to realize an idea

that seemed in every way unfeasible, but in the end was a real success.

The trip to the Gaspé Peninsula went off without a hitch, except that for another time in his life, Bernard was really discouraged and without energy.

This time, however, it was different from the previous periods of discouragement, and the evil seemed to be even deeper and more internal. It was as if someone among the spirits had enlightened him and made him sense that the situation was really serious, and that nothing was going to make things better as before. However, he was still convinced that the famous last-minute miracle would solve the problem and that his father would be able to live normally again and support his eldest son in his many projects.

Although he had left Sept-Îles on an impulse, he had nonetheless retained some of his wits, and had taken care to bring his typist and tape recorder with him in his luggage. In case he had to stay for several days, he could at least produce another series of Sport-Santé programs and record them at his parents' home. He had wanted to take this precaution, as the previous month's reels would soon be completely

played out, and no programs were prepared for the month ahead.

Despite his misfortunes, he wanted to keep his little personal empire in shape. Denis Auray had assured him that his job at the arenas was safe, and that he could still do it when he returned. He could stay at home for a few weeks that didn't matter.

On this point, however, Bernard had categorically stated to his boss that he wouldn't be gone for more than a week. He intended to go straight to the hospital to visit his father, even before going to the family home in Saint-Siméon. The hospital in question was located in Maria, the only chronic care facility in the Bonaventure region. However, somewhat motivated by an inner feeling, he decided to phone his mother in Matane to find out if the impossible had happened during the night. His aunt had been so adamant about the seriousness of his father's condition that it was quite possible that he hadn't made it through the night.

His mother reassured him, but asked him where he had reached on his journey? As he answered this question, he added that he intended to go straight to the hospital to visit his father.

This was an important clarification, as Bernard was not to break the plan. Leonard had not been warned of the seriousness of his case, nor should he be. He was convinced that he would recover quickly, and even the doctors had deemed this simulation preferable, if not necessary. Leonardo's impulsive, nervous nature made him one of those people who couldn't bear knowing they were going to die, and being aware of it could sometimes go so far as to aggravate their case and accelerate the rate of progression of the disease. At least, that was the opinion of the doctors in charge.

Bernard agreed to play along and wait until the evening before going to see his father, even though we'd be going there as a family.

As agreed, he would have to tell a supposed story about why he had gone to the Gaspé; a vacation that was available to him and he had taken advantage of it while his father was in hospital. Nothing could be more normal.

And while he was resting, he intended to put some effort into planning his Sport Santé series, due to air on Baie-des-Chaleurs television next fall. Léonard was overjoyed at this news.

His father was really in a bad way. Normally a well-built, slim man who weighed around 150 pounds, he had been eaten away by illness to such an extent that he now weighed only around 70 pounds. In less than two weeks, Leonard had withered to this point, and it was this sign in particular that convinced those closest to him that his days were definitely numbered.

Bernard himself was stunned, and although he still believed in the miracle, he felt powerless in the face of such a circumstance. The man who had been his father and the one lying there in the hospital bed were physically not the same.

In conversation, however, he recognized his real father, and it was with the greatest difficulty in maintaining a serene air that he managed to hold a conversation with Leonard, only to go immediately into the corridor to burst into tears and rage against the hospital staff and the local doctors, whom he judged to be pure incompetents and complete imbeciles.

If he could, he would have crushed them all.

Finally, in a private meeting, he met the doctor

directly responsible for his father. This doctor, a certain Dr. Gagnon, could only repeat what he had previously told the rest of the family: "Léonard Bujold had only a few weeks to live. The form of cancer he was suffering from was fatal, and in his particular case, the degree was more than highly advanced."

Léonard would not live much longer than expected.

Bernard had received a call from his family asking him to travel immediately to Gaspésie on May 9, 1976, and on June 5, less than a month later, his father ended his agony in his hospital bed.

Having only vaguely regained consciousness that day, he could only utter a few nods and grunts when his son Bernard shook his hand in a last-ditch effort to force his father to cling to life. Just the day before, Bernard had told him about Sport-Santé and his plans for the future:

"You're going to be fine. You're strong and you've been through worse than this. We're going to visit Sept-Îles again together and I'll show you my favorite spots."

His father had said yes, and he had smiled slightly in support of his answer.

It was to be his last smile on this earth, because the next day he would have died having, for the first time since Bernard had known him, forgotten to keep a promise he'd made. He hadn't clung to life and had preferred to leave for this journey into the afterlife. It was as if he finally felt better there, and as if he no longer had the strength or inclination to fight for the privilege of living physically, a privilege which in reality is not a privilege at all. Perhaps he had understood this truth and faded from the earth.

He was born on November 5, 1915, and made his grand departure on June 5, 1976. He had lived for 61 years.

It's always very painful for someone to lose either their mother or their father. No one ever becomes completely adult, and the presence of parents comforts us and makes us believe that they can still protect us in the face of life's obstacles and adventures.

Often this is not the case, except in our minds. But since the mind largely governs our bodies, the presence of our parents is really important.

For Bernard, as I said earlier, his father's presence

was doubly important in his mind, and his father's death was necessarily the occasion for a very intense emotional shock.

In the end, this shock was better absorbed than if he'd known it a few years earlier, when he hadn't yet experienced life away from home. He had begun to fend for himself in the face of daily demands, and knew something of the magnitude of his personal possibilities. However, the negative consequences of the death of his worst were not absent.

In less than two months, he quit his job at the Sept-Îles arenas, perhaps to apply for another job, but if his worst had lived on, he would never have left Sept-Îles, because Leonard would have strongly advised against it. He found himself completely at the bottom of the ladder, with nothing left of his work except Sport Santé, which had miraculously been saved from the wreck.

Seen in hindsight, however, the end result of that unfortunate day was a growth in Bernard's personality, for whom hardship became like fertilizer. The more he was struck by misfortune, the more he learned to defend himself against it, and he seemed to grow stronger from these attacks of fate.

After his father's death, he becomes something he had never really been before, despite his few personal achievements: a real man, independent and able to live on his own without the help of his parents.

Between June and August 1976, the date of Bernard's return to his native Gaspé, several events occurred in rapid succession.

All in all, it's fair to say that he was wondering about his personal direction and his real future in life. For a while, he thought he'd focus all his efforts on sport, and in particular on leisure activities, but then he decided to focus solely on journalism. He resigned from the city management and became a full-time journalist for a small local newspaper, *Le Nordic*. A weekly paper where he was entrusted with the sports and advertising departments.

However, within a week of taking up the post, he regretted his actions and returned to his former manager, Denis Auray, for help in reintegrating him into the sporting world. His target was not so much Sept-Îles, but Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, where an arena manager position was vacant.

Asking his former supervisor for advice, he emphasized the enormous confidence he had in him, and that the reason he had left him so recently was largely due to the death of his father, which had totally transformed him. Since then, he hadn't felt the same, and he wondered when he'd ever be himself again. If he could secure the administration of the Sainte-Anne des Monts arena, it would be a step forward and would enable him to really regain his self-confidence. At least, that's what he told Denis Auray.

His former arena supervisor lectured him for a good hour¹ In his opinion, it was unacceptable to have acted as he had in recent weeks.

Granted, his father was dead, but there comes a time when a man has to show that he really is one. And only the real ones make it in this world, or at least only they deserve jobs with certain responsibilities. Despite his great anger; perhaps a little pained at having seen Bernard quickly destroy what had taken an enormous amount of time to build and an incalculable amount of effort, he agreed to support his former employee and assured him that he would do everything he could to help him get the job of arena manager for the town of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. He would even go so far as

to contact the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts authorities to advise them to hire the candidate from the Sept-Îles arenas, and so they set about putting together an application and planning the approach process. After a few days working on the file and polishing the elements, Bernard decided to pack up and move closer to his new workplace. He also wanted to go directly to Sainte-Anne des Monts to meet the town's management and try to get some good support on his side before the final elimination.

And so the moving arrangements began. He made the rounds of his friends and acquaintances, bidding them farewell and promising to return soon.

Fairly confident of his chances of being hired as a manager in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, he spread the word to many. He was leaving Sept-Îles for the better. He was now going to be the big arena manager. That was life, and he had to climb the ladder to the top.

He finally set sail for home at the end of August 1976.

Having set foot on what was supposed to be a land of wealth, and with the hope of catching some of it,

he was leaving with some of these treasures in his ship.

The first experiments in this environment had been carried out in 1974, when he was just 18 years old. Now he was leaving with a wealth of experience and adventure that had made him strong and able to withstand life's trials and tribulations. To what extent he didn't know, but the future would tell soon enough. He was now 20 years old. All in all, he had spent two years learning about life and letting it take its course on its own without blinkers.

From now on, he told himself that he would be stronger to pursue the long road of his existence and that he could only have learned something from the direct initiation of the last twenty-five months. Obviously, you don't leave a country you've lived in for such a long time without daydreaming and meditating on the moments you've experienced there. And as he embarked on his return journey, he thought back over the main events of his exile and couldn't help feeling nostalgic. Among the fondest memories he retained, it was that of the arenas that was dearest to him. He had loved his job to the full, and for the first time, he had known what it was like to live the work you have to do. He had become one with the arenas.

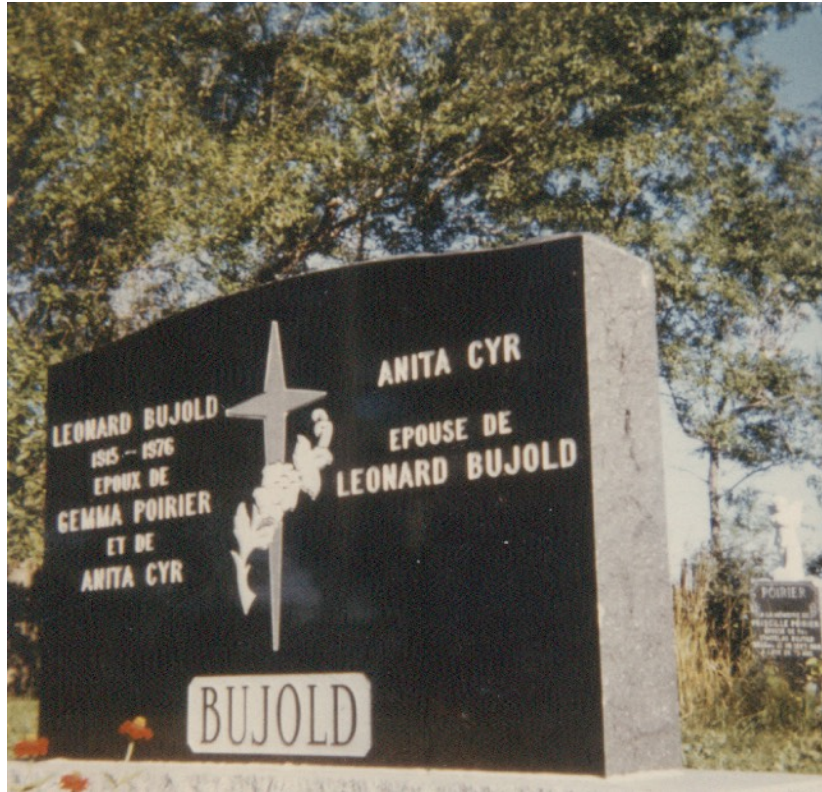
Then, among the worst moments, suddenly he couldn't remember any. Why keep a memory that makes you sad? It's a waste. That's what he told himself inside. He was leaving the Côte-Nord happy with his alliance with her and he would keep wonderful memories in his mind.

The treasure of the Quebec Incas really did exist. He had been able to touch it and admire its splendor!



Léonard Bujold (1915-1976)







House and backyard of Léonard Bujold in Saint-Siméon de Bonaventure - 1976



CHAPTER SEVEN

Debut on Gaspésie television

On August 20, 1976, Bernard Bujold returned to the family home in Saint-Siméon.

The setting was much the same as when he had left a few years earlier. It was late summer and the temperature, though cool, was still very pleasant. Everything seemed to have stayed the same, without even having aged. The trees on the estate, the walls of the buildings, the other houses in the village - everything.

The only major change was the absence of his father, the master of the house.

The position of arena manager for the town of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts was supposed to be officially awarded in the first weeks of September. Bernard made several trips directly down there - it's only a two-hour drive between Saint-Siméon and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts - and he multiplied his

telephone calls in order to gain support for the official and final selection of the successful candidate. Several authorities in the town's administration had openly assured him that a good word would be said in his favor and that he would most certainly be chosen. He was well experienced in his work in Sept-Îles, and his involvement in the world of sports and radio would be of great use to him.

So we had no hesitation in siding with him.

Finally, around September 16, when no official confirmation had yet been received and Bernard was getting tired of waiting - even though he'd been clearly told the week before that his name had not been ruled out, but that it was the decision itself that had been delayed by a few days - he decided to go back to Sainte-Anne des Monts and see for himself where things stood.

Before leaving, however, he made a phone call to one of the people he had befriended professionally a few weeks earlier, a member of the municipal administration. (We won't mention the exact name here).

"Listen, sir, what's going on with our business? The

first week of September has gone by and I still haven't received any confirmation of my commitment, despite your assurances. I'm well aware that the final decision wasn't taken as planned last week, but could you tell me what's really going on? "

The man on the other end of the line looked uncomfortable, as if he had some bad news to deliver and didn't know how to begin his story.

"Well, here it is. The town council meeting took place yesterday, Monday. You know how it is sometimes in city government, Bernard. Politics does exist. You were two individuals of roughly equal competence. A guy from Rivière-du-Loup and you. At the last minute, the mayor and councillors decided to give the job to a local guy. A young guy who was unemployed. And you know, this young guy hadn't even officially applied for the job. That's why I'm telling you that the matter was settled politically". The caller went on to emphasize that, in the final analysis, it was not competence that had played a part, but political contacts. He also wanted to wish Bernard good luck, hoping and even believing that he would have no difficulty in finding a job quickly and in the same field.

Normally, this would have been expected. Denis Auray had clearly pointed out this state of affairs, which is always present in obtaining a position of municipal leadership. Guy Marcheterre also had a word to say. The management of an arena, even in a small town like Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, surely had to be controlled by the local "politicos". "The Japanese didn't invent the world", he said.

Politics exists everywhere, whether on a large or small scale. It even begins in the family, where father and mother sometimes have a favorite among their children.

If only the position of arena manager had been for a municipality like Bonaventure or one close to his hometown, he'd have had a much better chance. And that's what we'd been vaguely trying to get him to understand, so that if he wasn't going to retire from the fight, he'd at least be aware of it and take action accordingly.

Which he hadn't done, apart from making a few friends in the leisure administration, but avoiding any political plots.

And now he'd lost the game. His cards were wrong.

He would have to play again somewhere else or give up completely. Giving up wasn't really his style, and he'd learned that the misfortune of failure always hides a greater success behind it.

But what is an individual who has just turned 20, with only a decade of schooling, and who has destroyed all his personal contacts by abandoning them in Sept-Îles and returning to his native region. What could he really do to rebuild a personal empire? That was the question to be answered, and obviously, if the answer existed, he'd certainly have to work hard and dig deep to discover it, and thus start again from the ashes of the past.

September brought nothing special. Bernard rested and took a few steps to put up for sale some of the family's properties, which were no longer being looked after following Léonard's death. There was also Sport-Santé, which continued and was now broadcast on CHAU-TV as well as on CJMC and CHNC radio. He also took a few steps to set up his personal financial and material affairs and began negotiations with a local bank.

It wasn't until mid-October that he decided to

actively look for a job. But which field should he go into? Journalism or sports? He seriously wondered. He would have liked to have stayed in Gaspésie, as his mother had offered to let him stay with her for at least a year, to help her wind up the family business and enable him to leave the village of Saint-Siméon as soon as possible and return to his native New Richmond.

However, it was becoming increasingly clear that there was no work available for him in the immediate area, at least not on a permanent basis. The few local industries dealt only with pulp and paper and logging. Other than that, the other possible employers in the area had little in the way of work for him. Municipalities with recreation departments operated on shoestring budgets, and when they had the opportunity to hire a professional, they chose him or her from among recent college graduates, and tried to get him or her on the cheap by offering a salary that was often below the industry average.

No, there was nothing available for him on that front.

Journalism? Not much better.

From the time he left for Sept-Îles to the present day, the same presenters could be heard on the airwaves of the local radio station, CHNC, and when a new one arrived, he rarely stayed for more than a few months. It was obvious that the good jobs were scrupulously kept by those who took them on.

What's more, his real skill lay in journalism, not in presenting or hosting music shows.

On the journalistic side of things, CHNC didn't use anyone who was really responsible for this sector alone. On the journalistic front, CHAU-TV, the local television station, remained. At the time, there was nothing available on a permanent basis there either. The presenter in charge of the news department seemed more than interested in staying with CHAU-TV. So there was no need to fill the position.

In the end, the only solution was to quickly wind up the family business and leave as soon as the job was done. However, in order to set up certain facilities and pass the time in a useful way, Bernard decided to lend his collaboration as a journalist to various regional media, on a partial basis of course.

The first target was Radio-Canada in Matane. After a short trip to CBGAT, he came to an agreement with the news director, Claude Roy. The two had agreed that for the entire Baie-des-Chaleurs territory, he, Bernard, would be the journalist in charge, or more precisely, the one who would guide Radio-Canada to the news of interest. In other words, he would become a sort of news pointer. He would also produce texts, but only when the subject was really interesting.

On these occasions, it was agreed that he would write the story and send the finished product directly to the Matane offices. This was his first part-time responsibility, and while it provided some income, it also gave him enough free time to take care of his family's business. Selling land, selling the family home, etc.

He also tried to encourage his mother in the direction she would have to take with her two young sons, one of whom, André, was practically set in his ways. He was now sixteen, and a specialized institute in Quebec City was taking care of him, both academically and indirectly, to get him into the job market.

It was the other son, the youngest, who was in a worse position. Fifteen-year-old Raynald was still in high school. Bernard was trying to advise his mother on the process to be used so that he would be able to complete at least secondary five.

Personally, however, he would have preferred to see his youngest leap quickly into the job market. He often said:

"I started working when I was sixteen and look how good it's been for me. The job market is the school of life and it's the best school."

His other occasional responsibility came with the approach of the 1976 provincial election. Curiously enough, the CHAU-TV presenter, at the time a fellow by the name of Paul Lessard, had privately hinted to him that he was... planning to leave. He'd had enough of the region and, it seems, was being offered a great position elsewhere. A Radio-Canada station in British Columbia had approached him to take over sports reporting.

Il invited Bernard to infiltrate the station and come and help out in the news department, writing up some of the news he'd previously gathered from around Baie-des-Chaleurs.

It was around the end of October, and the provincial election was fast approaching. They had been set for November 15 to be exact; a date when, as we know, the Bourassa government suffered an almost complete defeat except in a few ridings, including Bonaventure, the riding represented by the well-known Gérard D. Lévesque. Paul Lessard, who was more of a Unionist, told his new journalist: "My dear friend, I think you're my man. You know we're in the middle of an election campaign, and I don't have the time or inclination to cover it from a news standpoint, but if you're interested, it's yours.

"Bernard didn't hesitate for a moment and agreed. He would have to be objective and try to sweep his surveillance over the three counties of Baie-des-Chaleurs: Gaspé, held by the Liberal Dr. Fortier; Bonaventure, with Gérard D. Lévesque; and Matapédia, with the no less famous Bona Arsenault, perhaps the politician best known in Gaspésie for his fiery, oratorical and political skills.

Naturally, he gave preference in his work to the riding of Bonaventure. He lived there, and it was easier for him to really follow what was going on. But he also kept an eye on the rest of the countryside at the same time.

Since we've told several anecdotes about the main events described since the beginning of this book, we'll stick to our custom and quote for this chapter the following situation, which Bernard himself likes to recount when talking about his young political memories.

In Bonaventure County, there were three serious candidates. First, the incumbent, Gérard D. Lévesque. Then there was the Parti Québécois candidate, Jean-Paul Audet, a doctor from the Gaspé who had a good chance of winning, not so much because of his personal ability, but because he was very well organized. This was also the case in several other counties in the province, where the Parti Québécois won. Quite often, it was the riding organization that won the day.

Finally, there was the Union Nationale candidate, a local businessman, and owner of the regional cinema chain, Louis Roy.

Personally, Bernard didn't support any of the candidates. His family had always been Liberals from father to son, but he hadn't yet chosen a specific color.

However, René Lévesque's verve hadn't totally spared him, and he couldn't help but respect the leader of the Parti Québécois, even if he wasn't entirely happy with the idea of separation.

On the other hand, in the riding of Bonaventure, Gérard D. Lévesque is a son of the region, and it's rare in the population, despite what people say, that people don't respect this MP who has represented the riding of Bonaventure since June 28, 1956. This is also the date of Bernard's birth, and he found the analogy very strange when it was pointed out to him later at the National Assembly.

During the campaign, Bernard, like all the others, was tempted to admire the Liberal candidate. The Union Nationale candidate, on the other hand, may have represented a more or less strong party in the last election, but he couldn't have been more interesting to listen to. Louis Roy has a way with people that immediately puts them at ease. So he didn't spare the young CHAU journalist.

And therein lay the problem. Who to support officially and in reality during this campaign?

As far as his journalistic work was concerned, he could always remain objective and everything would be fine, but as far as his personal support was concerned, he had to make a decision and agree to favor one of the candidates.

However, this problem of allegiance almost solved itself, and thus caused little difficulty.

On one of the weekends during the campaign, Bernard decided to travel the Gaspé Peninsula and attend part of the various public meetings held by the candidates. He had planned his schedule according to all the candidates' schedules, and he expected to be able to attend at least one period of each meeting.

So off he went.

The first rally on his list was that of the Liberal party, which for the two counties of Bonaventure and Gaspé presented only one assembly, and obviously the Bonaventure MP had come to try and help his colleague Fortier win a few votes.

This meeting of militants was scheduled for two o'clock in the afternoon in a school hall in Chandler.

Arriving early, he noticed that CHNC was also on site, having simply purchased airtime to broadcast a live report of the gathering. Several other journalists, virtually all of them based in the Gaspé region, were also on hand. Most were representatives of local newspapers.

Presumably, the big guns were on site, and this conclusion was further reinforced when Gérard D. Lévesque and Dr. Fortier arrived, accompanied by some fifteen or twenty mayors from the main towns and municipalities of the Gaspé region. They all unconditionally supported the Liberal party and had come to affirm this openly.

The crowd as a whole - some 400 to 500 people - also seemed to be fully behind the party in the demonstration, and not a single negative remark came from the stands.

"Well, let's look elsewhere", said Bernard to himself.

He made his way to a nearby street where, at the local school, it was the Parti Québécois candidate for Gaspé, Jules Bélanger, who was warming the spirits of his activists. The atmosphere was calmer, however, and felt more like theater. Some 400 to 500 people - roughly the same number as at the

simultaneous Liberal party rally - were comfortably seated in the amphitheater, listening almost religiously as candidate Bélanger, alone on stage with a few organizers seated at a table in the background, explained the province's political situation as he saw it personally.

"Well, there's still time to look elsewhere," Bernard repeated to himself. It was about 3.30 p.m. and, as he had planned according to his schedule, he expected to be in Port-Daniel by 4 p.m. to hear the PQ candidate for the Bonaventure riding speak for a few minutes. However, this was without anticipating a slow-moving car blocking traffic. He, like the others, found himself in the queue and arrived in Port-Daniel a few minutes late, at around 4:20 p.m. He immediately made his way to the office. However, he immediately went to the site of the Parti Québécois rally.

To his surprise, the meeting room was almost empty.

"Yep. It's over already. "he thought inwardly.

Still, he asked someone on the spot, an individual who seemed to have recognized him from the small screen. He politely replied: "Oh no, Mr. Bujold, the rally isn't over yet. You see, Dr. Audet has been delayed, but he should be here around 5 p.m."

Bernard took the opportunity to ask if the other militants would be back around that time to cheer on their candidate. Only about thirty people were present.

The friendly informant replied that there probably wouldn't be more participants, even adding that he considered the presence of so many supporters to be beautiful. He also explained that tonight in Port-Daniel there was a Canadian Legion supper where practically the whole village and surrounding area had gathered. Such suppers were enormously popular, and he wondered why he hadn't been there himself.

Wanting to take advantage of the goodwill shown by the individual in front of him, Bernard finally asked if, according to his sources of information, he could tell him about the turnout earlier in the afternoon at the gatherings of this party, the Parti Québécois?

The informant replied that he had just telephoned Bonaventure, where there had been a rally at 2 pm. About fifty militants were present. In Paspébiac, about the same number had attended. With that Bernard now knew enough, and returned to his home in Saint-Siméon.

The next day, he went to the station and presented an account of the weekend's political activities for the evening news bulletin. Naturally, he emphasized the facts as he had seen them.

The Liberal party had assembled its big guns; the Union Nationale in Gaspé had done nothing specific over the weekend; and in Bonaventure, the candidate had gathered a hundred or so activists in a Caplan community hall. (Bernard had contacted a few of his friends to find out what had happened at this rally, which he had been unable to cover personally).

Finally, he commented on the Parti Québécois weekend, saying: "In Gaspé, some 400 to 500 militants had gathered. And in Bonaventure, well, only a few had taken part, and the party hadn't had one big rally, but several small ones. All in all, they

were the least happy of all the parties, at least as far as the last weekend was concerned..."

This news was broadcast that evening on the 6.30 p.m. bulletin, news that had been recorded earlier in the afternoon.

That same evening, he set out to attend a meeting of the Quebec party, which seemed headed for failure. He arrived on the scene around 7.15 pm.

A few minutes later, he saw the party's candidate, Dr. Audet, arriving in his turn, accompanied by a few aides. Bernard made his way over to him, to get a few comments on why his situation was, logically, more or less encouraging.

The comments came faster than expected, and even as a surprise:

"You're making a big deal of this. You're making me lose my election. We don't want you here anymore. We don't need journalists like you. "

Bernard turned to see if there was anyone behind him who was also a journalist. No, there wasn't. So necessarily these words were addressed to him.

Candidate Audet continued to lecture and began to

raise his voice. The latter, Bernard, then tried to explain that he had merely described a situation, that deep down he didn't hold any particular grudge, and that he even admired his leader, René Lévesque. If he'd made a mistake, he'd correct it the next day on the news.

Candidate Audet would have none of it, Bernard Bujold was losing him the election and he didn't want to see him at any more of his meetings. A number of local acquaintances were present, watching with a more or less direct eye the whole debate, which was in itself more interesting than the political speech, for which the militants had originally gathered, that was to come.

Visibly embarrassed in front of these people, Bernard decided to get out of the predicament he'd got himself into without really realizing it.

The following evening, in his daily description of the campaign situation, he commented on the state of each of the parties, but when it came to the famous Parti Québécois in Bonaventure, he said: "As for the PQ, well, it was in a rage that candidate Audet attacked the press yesterday. He claims that the press doesn't give an accurate account of his campaign."

That was certainly the best response to an attack of this kind. At least, that's what he and Paul Lessard, the official news director at the time, had decided.

Bernard would later comment, after the provincial elections of the time, on the reaction of candidate Jean-Paul Audet, who was ultimately defeated by Gérard D. Lévesque: "Personally, I didn't think I'd said anything untrue when I described the meetings of the various political parties. Nevertheless, I'm well aware that it can't be all that interesting to be told publicly on television that your campaign is taking a beating. Dr. Audet may have been right to be angry, but not because I'd mentioned his case and the way I'd interpreted it. He should have tried to explain his point of view to me and how he was going to improve his popularity. There was no point in yelling at me; he was alienating a potential asset completely. I wouldn't say I was against him afterwards in my reporting on that campaign; I continued to be objective. But in my heart I had this Audet guy firmly in rejection."

There's certainly one point where the Parti Québécois candidate didn't do the right thing, and that's in insulting Bernard in front of the people of his own region. Even admitting that the latter had

really misrepresented people's participation in Parti Québécois town hall meetings, the more junior politician would have tried to work things out amicably, especially when he saw that the offender appeared to be acting in good faith.

It's a bit like the individual who would kick someone in the backside by telling him he's a vulgar imbecile and then a few minutes later go and see that same person and ask him to pull out a tooth because the latter is his dentist. Needless to say, this dentist would consciously or unconsciously seek revenge for the kick he received a few minutes earlier.

In politics, you could say that journalists are the "dentists" of politicians.

Of course, you might say, journalists have to be objective. But they are first and foremost human, and when they have to interpret facts and report on them, it's certain that if the object they're describing has caused them a lot of trouble, then the news text will feel the pinch. It's a proven fact that no one who deals with news can be completely neutral and that in every report the personal appreciation of the journalist reporting the facts influences the whole

story and its public interpretation. Even if he remains objective in his words, the way he delivers the text will contribute to the overall appreciation of the idea expressed, whether favourably or unfavourably.

So, in the case of the PQ candidate from Bonaventure in the 1976 election, he had failed to follow the first and fundamental rule of politics, and added to his other mistakes, he was unable to win the final victory.

That campaign, as we know, ended in favor of Gérard D. Lévesque, an individual strongly identified with the National Assembly and who, among other qualities, possesses extraordinarily well-developed oratory skills. He's in the class of Trudeau, René Lévesque, Maurice Bellemarre, and the other greats of verbal elocution.

Gérard D. Lévesque's style is strongly influenced by his training as a lawyer and features many figures of the legal litigator.

In the riding of Gaspé, the Liberals were defeated and a priest, Michel Lemoignan, who ran for the Union Nationale, won the election. I say surprise because candidate Jules Bélanger was a strong

favorite. In most ridings, the Parti Québécois wave had swept all before it, and even in the riding of Matapédia, owned by Bona Arsenault, the PQ won.

It has to be said, however, that in Bona Arsenault's fiefdom, he contributed somewhat to his defeat, preferring to make way for younger people and devote more time to his research into the Acadian people. At the time of the last election, this unique politician was 74 years old. He was born on October 4, 1903. A more than respectable age for an active politician.

A few weeks before the campaign, Bernard saw another opportunity to make full use of the year he had promised to spend with his mother in Gaspésie. For a long time, many of his friends, both employers and colleagues, had been advising him almost regularly to go back to school. He only had a tenth year, and that wasn't very much, especially considering the high ambitions he openly and consistently displayed. So, as a slight solution to his schooling problem, he enrolled in a refresher course designed to give him accreditation for his fourth year of secondary school. The course took place in the evening.

"At least if he had to spend a year working for his

family, at least he wouldn't have wasted his time": he thought to himself.

He'd do a bit of part-time journalism, just to get to know the industry better, and continue his research on sports and the publication of his Sport-Santé columns, at least on CJMC and CHAU TÉLÉVISION, because when CHNC director Arthur Houde spotted Bernard on the small screen of the regional TV station, reporting daily on current events in the Gaspé region, he almost immediately terminated the service contract for Sport-Santé and his station CHNC. It has to be said that there's a certain parochialism between Gaspésie television and radio. The two managements are like cats and dogs, and we barely talk to each other. It's much the same situation in most parts of the province, where small media of the same kind - newspaper with newspaper, radio station with radio station - sometimes fight mercilessly.

But a television station in rivalry with a radio station in the same region, and not collaborating at all, is rarer. This was the case for Gaspésie, at least at the time.

So Bernard, in addition to all the activities mentioned above, began visiting local schools

around November 1976. And, strangely enough, it was at this same Bonaventure polyvalente, where he had shied away from entering the heartless monster that is a modern polyvalente, that he obtained his secondary four accreditation.

Among the memories he retains from this period of refresher courses, it's above all that of one person. A teacher who taught him French. A young married woman with two or three children. Her name was Claudette Henry, after her husband Gérard Henry, although her own name was Gauthier.

In a way, Bernard became good friends with Claudette, and kept in touch for a long time, even after he had finished attending remedial classes at the polyvalente in Bonaventure. In a way, he saw Claudette as an older sister whom he never had, and whom he often found among some of his female friends.

This Claudette Henry also organized a meeting between Bernard and his youngest sister, Louise Gauthier, who was almost the same age as Bernard. How this plot came about is very funny, or at least worthy of a woman. We won't recount it, but suffice it to say that Bernard found the sister in question,

Louise, very kind and that he thinks very highly of her.

A few weeks after the 1976 provincial election, Paul Lessard, CHAU-TV's news director, left his post as he had previously whispered. The responsibility had to be filled. Obviously, at first glance, Bernard hadn't hesitated to apply for the job, although he was a little annoyed. He had just started attending his remedial classes and during the day was beginning to enjoy the kind of life that his perhaps exceptional, but advantageous situation allowed him to lead.

His few activities as an occasional journalist fully satisfied him, especially as he was still seriously considering a return to the world of sports on an administrative level. A city like Quebec or Toronto would have delighted him enormously. Accepting a position as anchor journalist for Gaspésie television on a permanent basis would have meant giving up part of his coursework, but it would also have meant giving up the hope of heading off to other climes and other adventures as soon as summer arrived. Although he had officially submitted his candidacy and agreed, in return for a special arrangement allowing him to continue to attend the Bonaventure high school in the evenings, to act as a

kind of interim until a definitive replacement was chosen, he sincerely wondered what he would do if he were awarded the position, which was highly probable.

The best thing was to wait, but it was better to start looking for a possible way out.

In the end, the interim lasted longer than expected. The agreement reached with the station's management was advantageous for Bernard in several respects, and for the administration too. Using a presenter and journalist on a contractual basis was more economical than using him on a permanent basis.

It should be noted that, at the time, Yvon Chouinard did most of the commercial writing, which took a good deal of the work away from the other presenter. Of course, one day the station should remedy this situation and hire a full-time manager, but for a few months it's easy to explain oneself to the CRTC, and one can always claim that one hasn't found the ideal candidate and that the competition is open. It wasn't until early March 1978 that General Manager Yvon Chouinard announced to Bernard that he felt he was doing very well and that he thought Bernard could take on the position on a

permanent basis if he so wished. All that remained was to have this decision confirmed by the station's management committee, made up of various directors and a few shareholders. And of course, most importantly, Bernard had to accept the position.

As for himself, he had not hesitated to say that he would accept the position if the committee approved the decision.

He had given it a great deal of thought, and had come to the conclusion that he could do very well in Gaspésie, and above all that he owned a magnificent home in Saint-Siméon, which had all the amenities and was very well situated in the village center. The numerous facilities that his position with Gaspésie television would provide had finally been enough to calm and perhaps even extinguish his need for grandeur, and he had come to terms with the idea of never leaving his native Gaspésie.

But for this to become a reality, the management committee had to support director Yvon Chouinard's decision. The committee's decision came as a complete surprise. Yvon Chouinard figured prominently, but several other TV company directors also took their place and had their say. The

final answer was no to hiring Bernard Bujold on a permanent basis. So what happened? According to some reports, it was one of the directors, who didn't get on well with Bernard even though there was no real reason for it, who strongly criticized the latter's work, pointing out in particular that the young applicant was too young and didn't have enough schooling to handle the job of anchor-journalist at their television station.

Although Yvon Chouinard recognized Bernard's merits and was convinced of his talent, it was difficult for him to object to the comments of one of the directors who, although he didn't have to take direct orders from him, was nonetheless one of the important pillars of the administration at senior management level.

Bernard Bujold was a new acquaintance for him, and if they wanted his head, what else could they do but let it go, as Solomon did with Jean-Batiste...

The news was announced by Yvon himself, more or less directly, during a friendly interview. His young journalist even took a few minutes to grasp its meaning. Then, having understood, an inner rage overcame him. He had hesitated for a long time before even agreeing to take on the job for good,

and now, just when he had decided to accept, it was decided not to give it to him anymore. It was playing the fool with him. As he asked who was responsible for this decision to contrary first, he soon realized that his friend, who was also the director of CHAU-TV, would not betray the culprit of this gesture, which obviously hid a punitive vengeance. He respected Bernard, but board meetings were a secret affair and he owed it to himself, and ultimately to his boss, to respect such an embargo. It was the law of silence.

Bernard would eventually get to the bottom of the story and learn the name of the person responsible for the guillotine, but he would have to investigate further, using all the subtleties of the journalist in him. Hasn't it been said that a journalist is a bit like a detective? At least, that's how Bernard defines journalism in the first place.

It had not been three weeks since the position of news editor had been occupied by a permanent individual, a certain Claude Gauthier from Chicoutimi, when Yvon Chouinard entered into private communication with Bernard, who continued to work with the news from CHAU-TV despite the bad shot he had been given. He had said

it was useless to hold a grudge anyway, I'll be leaving next summer.

Yvon Chouinard spoke in a calm voice, but barely concealing a form of embarrassment and said to him: "Hi Bernard, how are you? Would you be interested in coming back to take up the interim? The individual we have engaged is leaving. Maybe we can talk about tenure for you, you know that..."

The CHAU director hadn't finished his last sentence. However, Bernard had understood and he will understand even more later. The individual we had hired simply did not measure up in terms of qualifications and his ability on the air. The management had finally had to face the facts. We had put our finger in the eye, but for the future, we would be safe, because whoever thought he was guillotining found himself with the ax over his own head this time.

From now on, in questions of choosing personnel to serve on the air and for journalistic work, he should leave this responsibility to others who are better qualified for such tasks. This is how the director of CHAU-TV wanted to give Bernard a helping hand, hoping that the latter would catch him and not retain any inner hatred against the station or its

administration and that he would agree to ensure the permanence.

Basically, he retained no hatred or resentment and he was even happy with the turn of events and his non-commitment three weeks earlier. From June, after having finished the work for his mother, he could leave for the exterior. Possibly that in addition to working he would try to continue his school studies and obtain some official qualification. He was only 20 and it was just as well to enjoy it while he was young.

It is indeed much more difficult to discipline yourself to go back to school when you are in your thirties, married, and father of two or three children. He, therefore, wanted to get ahead of this time, but while continuing to earn his living honorably. Also, he was categorical with the director of CHAU-TV and he told him firmly that he would gladly accept to ensure an interim as previously. He could do it for a few months even, until August of this year if necessary, but he had definitely decided to leave at the end of the summer, probably for Quebec or Toronto, the city where he had obtained indications that could allow him to return to the administration of municipal recreation.

He also pointed out to Yvon Chouinard that it was not hatred that motivated him, but logic. For his part, the director of CHAU seemed to understand quite well what his protege was telling him. He confessed that it was a good decision and that in time he would surely gain from having acted like this. From the bottom of his heart, he wished him good luck and would always be willing to say a good word for him if necessary.

Previously, however, you had to work and if Bernard wanted it, he offered to take care of the station and the news service from Monday. Proposal which was immediately accepted.

Several anecdotes come from the times spent at this television station, however, one of the funniest and directly affecting the field of television is that of the "hidden tape recorder".

Bernard has a bad habit of talking openly about his love affairs. Very often in this area, he adds a little and you have to know how to balance the facts normally. Even if he loves being in female company, he is not the "Valentino" type, and like everyone else, he has to struggle a little to win over his female prey.

One good afternoon when he was installed at his desk in the studio to go on the air, he was having a friendly chat as was regularly the case with the cameraman, a man named Pierre St-Orge. This one, without however Bernard really noticing it, led him to talk about a new secretary whom the management of the station had just hired. A pretty curvy girl in her mid-twenties who didn't seem to have a permanent date, at least for now.

He asked Bernard if he was going to "be funny" and invite the girl in question, a certain France Caissy. He pretended that they, the other station employees, were all married, but Bernard was a young bachelor so...

" How to fool me? If you knew my old man what I am capable of. Here at the station I have already made one fall into my trap. (here he named the girl in question). I'm not lying to you. With France and well Click and it's in the pocket. I want to do as the hunter before the hare, however. I want to track my prey. Poor Pierre, you know that I could give you lessons on this subject. "

He thus continued to boast of a thousand and one qualities and talents for almost ten minutes and if it had not been for his entry on the air, he would have continued so much he had gotten carried away.

It must be said, however, that both the cameraman and his colleagues in technical management, Rodrigue Barriault, Clovis Arsenault and, others, strongly encouraged him by provoking him, which made it possible to lengthen the debate.

In reality Bernard actually had an eye on the secretary Tedder, but he would never have told her what he had just said to his work colleagues. The attraction between him and the secretary seemed to be mutual and all that was missing was the initial spark to establish contact.

The day after this beautiful oratorical flight on his performance in front of the opposite sex, our heroic male went to poke around the side of his target's work desk.

"So you're okay? The sun really is thunder, huh?" (It was a beautiful sunny and warm day). She then simply replied: "No, it's not. And the weather isn't so nice." She then hastened to get up to go and chat with the other secretaries who seemed to have a smile on their face. There must surely have been something fishy and Bernard finally thought he had been possessed once again as he sometimes happens to him and he said to himself: "It is probable that this girl does not want

to know anything about me and that 'she's trying to trick me."

He simply decided to drop her and go and try his charms on someone else. Things stood there until the day, almost two months later, one of his co-workers came to his office and presented him with a tape telling him that it was news he had just recorded over the phone... Bernard mechanically put the ribbon in his machine and started the machine. Suddenly as he tried to understand what was recorded there, he thought he recognized his Acadian accent. Yes, it was him talking.

The day before the famous morning when he had found France, the secretary, in a bad mood, that famous evening when he had extensively elaborated on his ability in front of the young people from Gaspé and well, we had recorded his flight on magnetic tape. Then we had it, just for fun, and made it heard by the whole team of secretaries at the station, including France. It was not surprising that he was turned around by this poor girl who in the end had good reason to act in this way. From now on, however, he will watch himself, and never

again, god never again, will he brag about his performance.

With the modern era, Watergates, and electronic eavesdropping, it has become far too dangerous!



Bernard Bujold - 1976





Bernard Bujold at CHAU-TV Carleton, QC - 1976

CHAPTER EIGHT

Departure for Quebec and the National Assembly

Bernard was in charge of CHAU-TV's news department until the end of August 1977, when he joined the National Assembly of Quebec as a parliamentary reporter.

During his stay on Gaspésie television, after he had made the decision not to ensure permanence, but only an interim, everything happened in a relatively normal way. He was responsible for the information, its writing and narration, and this for two daily bulletins, one live at noon and the other at the end of the day at 6:30 p.m. This last bulletin included a sports block in addition to that of news. .

Among his other responsibilities, he had to see to the hosting of various public affairs or socio-cultural programs. Finally, he shared with Yvon Chouinard the responsibility for the commercial narratives and

the writing of these advertisements. In short all the tasks that can be found in a television station for a presenter and journalist.

The famous project to have a journalist officially accredited to the National Assembly for this CHAU-TV station came about during these months of April and March 1977. As before, Bernard laid it down a little by chance and not knowing very well if he had not gone too far in his thoughts and if this time he would not be expelled. Nevertheless a bit like a tiger likes hunting, Bernard likes risk and difficult situations so he did not reject the idea and even tried to realize it.

The latter ardently wished to go either to Quebec or another city, Toronto was on the list. Quebec was his favorite, but unlike Toronto, in Quebec, he didn't know anyone really involved in the labor market and mainly in his own sector.

Of course, at the time he could have been introduced by several of his acquaintances from Sept-Îles who would have easily found him a job in Quebec, but he had not seen them for almost a year. He was not so sure that all his contacts were still settled on the North Shore and not sure either that they were still in business.

For Bernard, however, Quebec was at the top of the list and he would have liked to go and live there for a while. So he was looking for a way that would allow him even before arriving on the scene to have a job, if not at least an orientation. This guidance came one evening while he was quietly listening to the television at his mother's home. It was towards the end of April 1977. He heard a report coming from Quebec and broadcast by Radio-Canada of Matane. It was a text by a certain Jacques L'Archevêque, curiously enough Bernard would have rubbed shoulders with him a few months later and be a bit of his pupil, which gave details of the provincial budget that had just been tabled by the government, the first of péquiste color. The event itself was very important.

The journalist in question, Jacques the Archbishop, had sent his message directly from the National Assembly.

"Here": he said to himself "This is the idea I needed" The idea was not so much contained in the narration or in the budgetary measures but in this journalistic presence inside the 'National Assembly. Less than four months later, he too would be there in this parliament of the province of Quebec. Certainly, it will take some preparations, but he had

found, that evening, the visa he needed to visit the old capital.

He was not long in submitting the idea to a potential leader, CHAU-TV, and it was his friend Yvon Chouinard that he asked for advice on the value of the idea he had just had. Chouinard appreciated the objective and according to him, CHAU would agree to sponsor its concrete realization. From then on, they each undertook on their own to set up a work plan. For his part, Chouinard would take care of the administrative details and Bernard would see to what was necessary to do to gain access to the National Assembly. Overall this idea of journalistic correspondence from the National Assembly was daring. Admittedly, Bernard himself saw nothing extraordinary in this, but his local journalist colleagues cried sacrilege and even tried to dissuade him from implementing this idea. According to them, Bernard did not have enough experience and he would completely break his back by moving to the National Assembly. In their experience, only journalists aged at least 30 to 40 could afford to go and work in this quasi-sacred place.

For Yvon Chouinard, on the other hand, a businessman in his spare time, this idea was not so eccentric or unachievable. Of course, it had to be

planned, because it was daring, but everything would go well, especially with Bernard, who was fearless, as a journalist ambassador.

In the end, the accreditation process with the Tribune de la Presse, an organization representing journalists serving in the Parliament of Quebec, was not too complicated. After some contact by telephone and with some steps on the part of the direction of CHAU, the business seemed to be buckled, at least with regard to the formalities of integration inside the National Assembly. It now remained to establish the terms of remuneration and to determine when such collaboration would begin.

We must not forget that Bernard was still the acting journalist and that his departure would therefore cause a void. For his part he would have liked to leave for Quebec at the end of June in order to be able to benefit from the summer and if he did not settle down immediately, he would take the opportunity to go for a ride on the American side. To visit New York, Boston, Washington, which he had mainly dreamed of visiting and for a long time, because it's a bit like the cradle of American history, then Detroit and finally returning via Toronto and meeting his few acquaintances from the place. In other words, he would have liked to take a vacation which in reality was long overdue. He hadn't really

taken one since 1974, when he had traveled all over the province, notably in Shawinigan, Montreal, Rimouski, Quebec, etc.

Unfortunately, he had to take on the interim until the end of August 1977 so he did not yet take the holidays which he was putting off from year to year. It must be said, however, that the last year had not been too exhausting, although at no time did his activities really cease.

The start of the collaboration from the National Assembly had been set for September 4, the first day of the fall program. There was nothing complicated as such in the form of the collaboration. It was just journalism. Bernard had enough experience to get by and also knew almost perfectly what CHAU's needs consisted of, its possibilities and of course what could interest the people of his region, of the Gaspé. It now remained to establish a form of remuneration. Here there could be problems, because CHAU was not a state network. It was a small, private resort and a few bucks really worth a few bucks. There was no question of throwing money out the window and it was obvious that we could not pay a full salary to a journalist that we would send to the National Assembly when in a direct way we would withdraw

any money from this investment. This would help overall the better functioning of the station, but nothing more. Moreover, if Yvon Chouinard had supported this idea, it was above all to please Bernard, because he would never have thought of setting such a project in motion, so many obstacles were there, at least for a station like CHAU.

At the same time it must be admitted that Chouinard had recognized the immense advantage provided by the presence of a journalist in parliament and in the present case we would be totally innovating what always feels like velvet inside. Indeed, as a regional media, Gaspésie television would be the first to have a journalist accredited on a permanent basis. The first media was not only for Gaspésie but for all of Quebec except the downtown region of Quebec as such.

The idea was therefore in this sense quite new and although a little risky in terms of success, it was worth trying. The management of CHAU finally made a series of offers on the remuneration granted for this work. The offers represented a whole but were divided into several components. Despite the fact that logically he made practically no dollar during the first months, having to defray a host of expenses, he accepted the salary offer. In his mind,

the important thing was to set the project in motion and to be there. Once there he would see how to solve the problem if there was a problem. Anyway, he didn't want to go to work in Quebec. Better to have an unpolished diamond than a vulgar rock or worse: nothing at all.

And on the other hand, he had several other very lucrative business ideas in mind and he intended to pursue them in addition to taking care of the business itself, which was the Assembly. national. Bernard, therefore, left Gaspésie on August 25, 1977. In his 1975 Ford Mercury Montégo car, he had taken all his luggage, ranging from some furniture to all his clothes and personal items.

The car, a fairly large model, was practically touching the ground, it was so loaded everywhere. In the trunk, on the seats, there was only a simple empty space and it was he who occupied it to drive the car.

However, he will regret having brought too many household goods, because he will have to bring almost half of them back to his mother since he will not have enough space in Quebec to arrange everything.

Arrived in the old capital, the first thing to do was to find an apartment. In this period of early September, most accommodation is occupied. Students have returned to the city, especially to Quebec, which is considered the student city of the province. Finally it is in pension that he will settle. The place available was located in a chic and comfortable neighborhood of Quebec, the city of Sillery. It is precisely at 1218 William at Monsieur and Madame Adrien Mercier that he will move. They had two children Sophie and Carl. Bernard will find himself at home there, because still in 1979, he will live at this address.

Once this problem was settled, he now had to tackle the National Assembly itself. And that's what he did the next morning very early.

He contacted a certain Daniel L'Heureux of the LaPresse newspaper, who was at the time the president of the journalists of the parliamentary gallery. The latter received Bernard warmly and vaguely introduced him to the facilities available to journalists to cover the activities of the Legislative Assembly. About seventy-two journalists were officially accredited. Many were attached to the same media, for example, groups such as Radio-Canada, La Presse, Le Soleil, La Presse

Canadienne, etc., have four or five full-time journalists solely to cover the Assembly.

L'Heureux also introduced the team of clerks and the telephone operator, Mrs. Jacqueline Gosselin, who was attached to the journalists' gallery. This department handles the distribution of press releases and various messages to each of the journalists. The director of this team is Melvin Racine whom the friends all call "Mel".

After these usual presentations, Daniel L'Heureux undertook to see to the installation of Bernard in some rooms. The available space was limited and no one knew where to put the newcomers. Finally, we found a place where it was still possible to accommodate another additional journalist.

The workspace was located in the same room already occupied by three journalists. Nevertheless, there was still room, and a few weeks after Bernard moved into this room, a fifth occupant attached to information was added. The office colleagues of our Gaspé journalist were among others: Jacques Larue Langlois, a very charming and friendly individual with whom Bernard will become a good friend, but who has strong ideas about social values. He was also indirectly involved with the events of October 70. At the time he was the journalist for the

newspaper Le Jour which closed its doors some time later.

Another of the colleagues was Michel Lacombe representing Radio-Canada and being in charge of a current affairs program at the level of everything that affects the National Assembly: PRESENT.

The third journalist to occupy the same room is a certain Peter Cowan from the English press agency Southam News, one of the largest English-language news agencies. Finally, the fifth occupant after Bernard's arrival was an English-language journalist who represented CJAD, one of the radio stations with strong ratings in the metropolitan area. This journalist, Bernard Saint-Laurent, had curiously enough already worked in Gaspésie in New Carlisle. He was notably one of the creators of the newspaper SPEC, the only English-language newspaper in the Baie-des-Chaleurs.

When Bernard Bujold arrived in office at the National Assembly, it was in full sessional work. This situation was very useful in immersing our ambassador from the Gaspé in the bath and putting him directly in front of what the work of parliamentarians consisted of.

Basically, you could compare it to a town council meeting, but on a much larger scale. The discussions are sometimes long and unfounded, but all the participants seem to be fully interested, or at least that is what they show publicly, apart from a few exceptions on occasion.

One of Bernard's first semi-official visits was to his deputy; Gerard D. Levesque. The two Gaspesians got along well, however, no one, neither Bernard nor Gérard D.Lévesque, wanted to harm the other. If one was a politician, the other was a journalist who had a pitching machine.

We seemed to have concluded like a pact without even having to say it, where everyone would act on their side in order to avoid the creation of gossip or conflict of interest. In other words, it was obvious that many would think when they saw Bernard in the National Assembly that it was the member of Bonaventure who had opened the doors to him. Because it is not easy to convince the media to send a representative in journalism full time inside these holy places. However, this was not the case and if some could believe it, so much the better it would only give free publicity to each of them. But the two interested parties themselves, the two sons of Acadia, knew very well that no political plot had

existed between them except a bond of friendship and respect which was due to origins and not to recognition for service rendered.

Another of the dominant figures in the National Assembly, and mainly in 1977, a time when a page of history was and still is in the process of being written in 1979, is René Lévesque, who is also a Gaspesian. He was born in New Carlisle a few miles from Saint-Simeon. With him, too, a secret pact will be created, without a word having been spoken, a pact of respect and admiration as two blood brothers do.

Sometimes they don't think the same way, but always deep in their hearts, they respect each other. Of René Lévesque, Bernard will say one day to his mother during a telephone conversation:

"You know, yesterday I attended René Lévesque's conference. It's funny, but at some point, I forgot the atmosphere and I thought I saw in him like my father..."

What he meant here is that Premier Lévesque, even in his high office, has retained the gestures and the way of speaking of the people of the Gaspé where he comes from.

Certainly, he speaks a more cultured language, but the natural and warm side of his speeches or simple discussions between friends resembles in every way what only a Gaspésian can do. This is also probably where René Lévesque's charisma comes from and why he is so adept at evolving in a crowd. We can even say that he perfectly masters the art of communication. He is neither haughty nor shy, but just on the right level, sufficiently authoritative and candid at the same time. We could even say that his good-natured air influences a lot when someone listens to him and becomes charmed and convinced. Bernard settled into his new office and began to produce some texts to send to the station he represented. He tried to give a regional flavor to national developments. Budget measures, bills, administrative changes, etc.

Nothing was very complicated, because he had a good experience in regional journalism and he did not hesitate to watch and monitor with a semi-secret eye, the ways of doing things of his fellow journalists in parliament. He considered it an incredible opportunity to be offered the opportunity to rub shoulders with highly experienced journalists and for whom the art of communications no longer holds any secrets. It is moreover somewhat true for his luck, because when he arrived at the National

Assembly he was the youngest of all the journalists ever to have entered to work in this parliament since its creation in 1792, at the time of the first legislative session of the province of Quebec, then called Lower Canada.

If he had accelerated his arrival and had arrived before June, he could have increased this record, he would have only been 20 years old since his birthday is June 28, but the figure of 21 still made him very honorable and his colleagues often pointed this out to him. He was the youngest of the parliamentary gallery of Quebec. It was an exceptional event.

The question now was to know if this Bernard Bujold would stay long inside the Parliament or if he had only flashed like the flame of a straw fire. Only the future could tell them.

A few weeks after his summary installation in Quebec; at his personal residence and work premises; he began to think of promoting his personal business. First, he decided to see if there was a possibility of continuing his school education in the evenings. A city like Quebec must surely have facilities of this kind and it would be interesting for him to take advantage of them. He thus succeeded

in enrolling in a remedial course for secondary level five which was given in the evening and where there was still a place available. He could therefore devote his days to his professional affairs and in the evening devote himself to perfecting his official qualifications.

At the professional level, he did not yet know very well whether he would settle firmly in the National Assembly or he would return to the field of municipal sports. In terms of sports, however, the possibilities seemed to be limited, at least what was available offered little advantage. It would therefore be, according to him, preferable to strike the iron in the field of political journalism.

If some businessmen risk a few dollars on certain projects, he too could risk a few on this career as a journalist. He, therefore, undertook to broaden the possibilities of work in Parliament by offering his collaboration to various media in the province and thus offering them to be a bit like their freelancer. On the one hand, CHAU-TV would support him and he would only have to use the same formula he had used a few years earlier with Sport-Santé.

We will remember that the results had been rather limited, but it had not been a total failure so we

could still believe in the formula. However, he took certain precautions and decided to devote a few hours a day to setting up his personal business financially and commercially. He was thus assured of being able to maintain a certain ease no matter what. He will be involved in particular in the sport with the gymnasiums of physical conditioning and in banking investments.

This work would not be complete if it were not for the customary anecdote on this period of the arrival at the National Assembly of Bernard Bujold. This time it is rather an interpretation of feeling than a funny fact.

Bernard was seated in the Salon Rouge; it is one of the two official rooms that make up the legislative building itself, it is in this room, among other things, that parliamentary committees and public debates on bills take place, and he had to attend as a journalist at the visit of any foreign dignitary among others Alain Peyrefitte Minister of Justice and Keeper of the Seals of the Ministry of Justice in France.

The protocol officers were on hand and seemed very nervous. Accompanied by the French dignitary: Prime Minister Lévesque and a few other

personalities such as the leaders of the main political parties in Quebec.

Most of the journalists from the Parliamentary Tribune were present and the atmosphere was very tense. While Monsieur Peyrefitte began to speak with ease in his voice rarely seen, our young journalist from Gaspésie left the huge room, at least in his thoughts. He remembered the time, when barely over 16 years old, he had offered his services to the provincial government for the planting of young pines. He relives the moments when sitting on a dead tree trunk he catches his breath. The times when he had to carry the metal boiler full of water and saplings and his walk through the forest which had been the victim of a fire a few years earlier and was now to be sown again by planting.

Then he caught sight of the manager of the Saint-Siméon cooperative with the afternoon sun filtering through the shop windows, and then the sea just in front. There were also the employees of this store, Camil Cavanagh, Rhéaume Gauthier, and Monelle Bujold. Suddenly he heard one of them shouting a joke at him about the way he carried the shopping bags.

And finally, he remembered lunchtime when Maurice Cavanagh, one of the employees of this cooperative, but also Bernard's confidant, offered to drive him home since he was passing just in front of his father's house, that of Leonard Bujold.

He then went to the airstrip located a few miles from Port-Cartier where he had landed with the sixteen other passengers on the Quebecair plane. He relived the sunsets that we would often watch while strolling along the quays of Sept-Îles during the summer. Car rides to Lac d'Aigle, Moisie and even Havre St-Pierre. There were also the long sunny afternoons on the beaches of Moisie. The mild and warm autumn of 1975, when he started at the Sept-Îles arenas. The young girl that Martine Auray had introduced to him.

And then in May 1976, he saw his father again on Maria's hospital bed. His smile and the jokes he told his son. He also remembered the advice his father had tried to give him one afternoon when he was having trouble with the mechanics of his car getting to the hospital. Despite his illness, Leonardo had come back to life as soon as his son showed his problems and he began to advise him on the

possible causes of the mechanical problems in question.

There was also the time when, still on his hospital bed, he said to Bernard:

"I listen to you every morning on the radio. I tell you that when it's time for Sport Santé at CHNC, I warn the guards to open the radio. It's urgent then I tell you that they're listening to me "

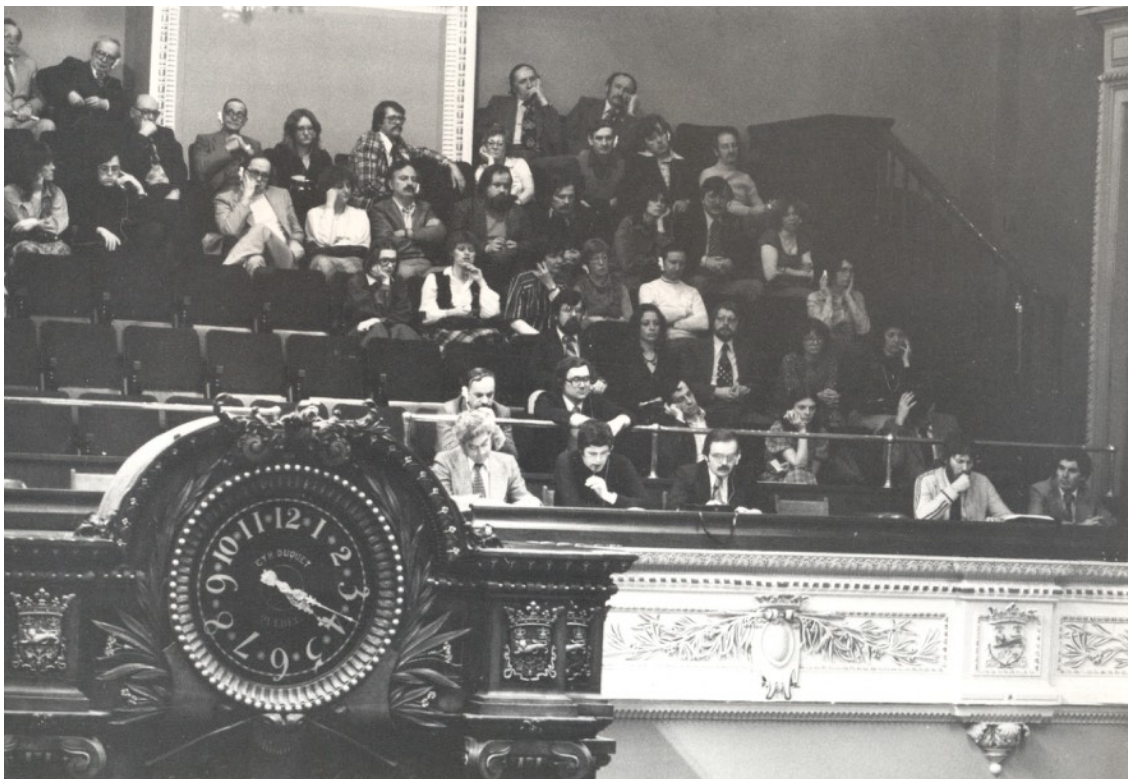
And, as one of these guards entered the room, Léonard had immediately introduced his son: "He is the presenter of Sport-Santé in New Carlisle, Bernard Bujold"

Suddenly Bernard returned to the Salon Rouge ceremony at the National Assembly. As he had come a long way since the days when he had to transport food parcels in the cars of customers of the Saint-Siméon cooperative. Is it possible that he is actually in the National Assembly of Quebec? He is a poor young Gaspé man with no value other than his courage and his faith in himself and in life. Was it a dream or reality? He seriously asked himself the question and was even afraid for a moment that someone would come and say to him: "Excuse me sir, you want to go out, you don't have permission to be here. It's not for you"

However, he was sure of one thing, if this father he had already had and who at the time was so proud of successes like the cooperative, Sport-Santé, and arenas; how proud he would be today to see this same son, his son, installed as a journalist in the National Assembly of Quebec.

This place which Gaspesians only talked about with hesitation, as if it had been a sin to simply think about authority and government.

Was it his only hope to one day ask his father what he thought of his son Bernard Bujold?



**Tribune for journalists at the National Assembly of
Quebec - 1977**





Bernard Bujold in front of the National Assembly - 1977

CHAPTER NINE

What will be Tomorrow?

And now you are just as aware of my little story as I am. The story of a simple individual from the countryside brought up in this environment where everyone watches each day pass by wondering if tomorrow will not be a little better and if we will not be rid of this poverty almost rooted in the race.

I apologize if I borrowed the pen of an imaginary author, the impersonal form, to tell you about my adventures, but I think that it was easier for me to look at my situation and to paint a portrait of it. objective and natural. All the situations explained and their details are true and there is no distortion.

For this last chapter, however, I will take my own pen and try to answer this question: What will tomorrow be like?

Tomorrow will surely be different from today!

And for all those who have the courage to go for it, life will certainly be better.

Myself, since my arrival here at the National Assembly, I have managed to improve my entire system. Currently, I produce texts daily for four radio stations in the province in addition to doing so for CHAU-TV. With this station precisely, the one that opened the doors of parliament to me, I renegotiated a new contract in terms of remuneration and we, my bosses and I, have significantly improved the working formula.

Among the other radio stations with which I collaborate, there is CKRS in Jonquière in Saguenay Lac-Saint-Jean, the director there is a certain Jean-Paul Berthiaume. There is also CHLC de Hauterive which is managed by Maurice Dumais. Finally, add to that: CFRP from Forestville and CJMC from Sainte-Anne-des-Monts.

There are obviously also various other employers, and media, who occasionally ask me for specific journalistic coverage of such and such an event.

So I have come to be able to live solely with journalism. However, I do not do it, because I keep some activities in the business world which are still at the beginning stage, but there as elsewhere I have confidence.

The important thing, however, is not in these facts, but in the final result which shows that starting from almost nothing, I was able to achieve a goal that was inaccessible at the start. By this success, one thing is immediately proven: nothing is impossible and you can concretely realize any idea you have in your head.

When in 1977 I said to myself: "Bernard, you too could be a parliamentary correspondent", several of my friends replied that I was much too daring. If I had given them reason, I would never have set foot in Quebec and no one from Gaspésie and elsewhere, more than a million listeners in total, would have been able to benefit from information on the activities and policies taking place in the National Assembly and concerning them directly. So it is with any new idea.

In the beginning, you have to know how to go beyond popular opposition and have the courage to risk, to sometimes endanger your own safety.

What will tomorrow be?

Well for me, strictly speaking, I don't know exactly yet. At first, I wanted to be a radio presenter to impress my friends a little. But little by little, fate has pushed into the corners and here I am in the bath up to my neck with journalism. If at the

beginning no precise link was attached to this field, today it is different and it is as if true love had been established between us. A love that tells me that the girl I love isn't the prettiest, but she's the girl I can't go without to live my life.

So I've come to love journalism, knowing full well that it's not the best career in the world. But I have learned over the years, even if I have very little under my belt, that it is not always the most beautiful girl who goes well with you. It must be chosen to take into account its overall value and not on a few furtive criteria.

Journalism is an important field for society and even, in my opinion, essential. He must inform each of the members of our community about what others are doing for the good or the bad of the life of the whole. Just as much at the political, cultural, sporting, or other level. Journalism, however, is a vocation!

Whoever occupies it must believe in his cause. He must live by and for journalism.

It is a very demanding career and no one succeeds. Personally, when young teenagers and even adults a bit on their way back to life ask me how to become

a journalist; I tell them it's exactly like a hockey player.

You don't train a hockey professional by placing him in a serial mold. It is he himself who must create and build himself. Of course, he will have to train under the supervision of a trainer and submit to long and painful exercises, but if he does not have the sacred fire; he will never be a good professional. He will certainly be able to play, but he will never reach the heights where only the truly marked by providence carve out a place for themselves.

It is exactly so with journalism.

The latter will certainly have to undergo intellectual training, but nothing can replace his personal experience of life in its raw and wild form. The journalist will have to deal with life, so the best thing for him is to learn at this specialized school, the school of life.

Of course, he will have assets if he has a certain educational background, but that is not the main thing.

Personally, I started with virtually nothing like training from schools. It was only with my personal principles acquired from father to son that I was

able to break down the walls separating me from my goals.

Certainly today I have filled some voids. I now have a school education. In January 1979, I registered for courses in industrial relations and economics at Université Laval with a view to obtaining an official diploma in this field. As for my secondary, I attend the university in the evenings.

But the only struggles that I had to lead to precisely pursue these school studies and wanting to continue working are teaching that I would not want to replace with anything else in the world. I remember precisely one month June in 1978 when I found myself with a work schedule of more than twenty hours a day. I had to take some high school courses in order to complete the school program, the schedule was from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. late in the evening. There was of course my journalistic work and to make matters worse in June it was the end of the session; then the activities are condensed in order to achieve as many as possible. Press conferences, adoption of laws, parliamentary commissions, nothing is missing and there is not a minute's respite.

However, I noticed that it would be possible for me, by enrolling in college-level courses during the summer, to be admitted to Laval University as early as January 1979. I had met certain educational advisers and they had established with me the requirements that the university management would require to accept me in their institution.

However, if I wanted to arrive in time for registration in January, I had to register for three courses at Cegep during the summer session. Of course, I could have delayed my entry to university by six months or taken classes at Cegep during the day, but I neither wanted to stop working nor to delay the date for my university debut. So I decided to play my chances despite the many opinions advising me against it, opinions from friends or work colleagues. I therefore only registered for three courses to be given during the 1978 summer session. session of the National Assembly would also be adjourned. Nevertheless from June 5 to June 21, during these three weeks, my work schedule would reach a total of twenty hours a day for five days a week.

I myself wondered if I would make it through. My schedule was as follows: I went to my parliament office around 4 am, I read the reports of the parliamentary committees and the various debates

of the previous day. Then I did some texts on this information. In addition, I read the morning papers and listened to news reports to give direction to my texts based on all the news of the day to come. Then came 8 o'clock when I left in haste for François-Xavier Garneau college while at 8:30 am the course for which I had registered began: a course in philosophy. Luckily we had a few minutes off around 10.30 am and I took the opportunity to have a frugal lunch in the canteen or by eating a few sandwiches that I had bought while passing in front of a restaurant on my way out of parliament. Thereafter at 11.30 am, the philosophy course finished, and I rushed to the National Assembly to plunge back into the affairs of the State. Journalistically, of course.

I continued to work in this way until 3:45 p.m. when I sent my various texts summarizing the National Assembly's question period. It must be said that this question period, which lasts 45 minutes, is a bit like the daily questioning of members of ministers and the government in power, here the Parti Québécois. During this period, Members may request any information from a minister, although the latter is not obliged to respond. The reverse can also happen and a Member of the party in power can ask questions, but generally, the Speaker of the

Assembly gives preference to Members of the opposition parties. Every session day, this period returns, and for most journalists, it is the most interesting time of the day. Very often one obtains their material for good news because it is not uncommon to see the deputies and ministers yelling at each other and each trying to accuse the other of conspiracies, dishonesty, and all the vices. Sometimes it even feels like we are watching a play. So in my case, immediately after this question period, I jumped in my car and went to the other end of the city near Place Laurier to a secondary school in Ste-Foy to follow the teaching there, that is the rest of the secondary five programs in which I had registered. I often arrived a few minutes late, but I stayed in front of the teachers of this program until 10 p.m. at the end of the day.

Thus, once out of this school, before I took my first and only good meal of the day and washed myself, I never went to bed before midnight, sometimes later. I led this rhythm of life for three weeks and could only take advantage of Saturdays and Sundays to recover on the sleep plan.

Certainly, people will tell me, I could have avoided all this turmoil by delaying my registration at university for six months. I decided otherwise,

judging that I was capable of self-discipline for as short a time as three weeks. However, decisions like this cannot be made overnight. You have to have a little self-confidence and not be afraid of work. You have to know how to maintain a decision that you have made and tell yourself that time is money. By completing these remedial courses at the secondary level in a condensed manner with those at the college level, I was finally able to register for the January 1979 session at Université Laval.

I was practically prouder of having won the struggle against events than of being able to start attending university.

Since then, well, I certainly have more free time and I take care of my business a little more and I allow myself a few moments of leisure through gallant outings or a few good sports matches where I am a participant. But I believe that it is by disciplining oneself on certain occasions like me in June 1978 that one manages to form a personality with certain faults, but not being afraid of effort and risk.

And we can also say that we live our life fully and that we do not waste any moment of it. Because to live is to move, to seek, to learn, to know, and to darken in addition, of course, to calmly agree to

certain moments of rest and relaxation. I am often asked if I will always do journalism, especially considering the fact that I started there very young and that I managed to obtain certain successes. A question that I can hardly answer.

A great American lady said:

"It's one of the strange things about human nature that we always expect the best and forget to fear the worst, despite the lessons of experience.

Men are apparently destined to remain optimistic.

Would we dare to bring children into the world, apply ourselves to raising them and make plans for their future if we remembered that every moment to come conceals the unknown and that for all of us, individual, family and community, and even nation; there may be no future on earth. -Rose Kennedy.

This lady must have seen, despite the great moments of joy in her life, her sons murdered before the nation and their family empire continually the prey of the gods.

However, this same lady also said and here I quote:

"No one is exempt from hardships in existence and if one believes oneself to be specially marked by misfortune, one is mistaken, others have suffered much more and these are not not the tears that make the suffering bearable, but the will."

Personally, I'm still very young and surely I have a long list of problems that are patiently waiting for me that I will have to face and overcome if I want to be successful or just live my life. Life is so short that you have to live every moment of it and try to know all the possible experiences. However, we must act cautiously, especially when we have embarked on a path and we are beginning to concretely give shape to our empire. Do not abandon half-finished work.

We should not change jobs for the simple pleasure, but because thus we will improve our personal situation and we will help the whole of society to be better."

I will quote another sentence from Rose Kennedy:
"Everyone should participate in the public good, for his country, and for all humanity."

Participating in the public good for me means doing what you have to do well. Whether street sweeper, store clerk, or journalist.

We have already said:

"There are no stupid professions, only stupid people."

It is somewhat true.

Personally, I like journalism, and regularly, almost every month, often every week, I receive new job offers. Some come from the journalistic world, others from the world of business or sport. I have to choose and in many cases I refuse. In others too, it is the employers who refuse me. But the important thing is not there. The important thing is in the courage to go for it.

This same Rose Kennedy, for whom I have a great deal of esteem, as indeed for the entire Kennedy family, once told this story which can be addressed to us Gaspesians, Quebecers, or to her family:

"With us on the side of the Kennedys, the ancestors were poor people who had not deserved their miserable fate, but they had the imagination, the will, and the energy necessary to improve their living conditions and those of their family. Their hard work and their perseverance allowed them to endure all the hardships with their eyes turned towards the future and they knew how to make plans and seize the chance when it came within their reach, provoke it if necessary.

If I wanted to write this book and dedicate it to all the young people who will read it, it is to show them clearly that no matter their origin, family, fortune or

whatever; it is possible to modify one's destiny and to obtain personal victories in the face of this life.

I myself was not favored in any way, no more to take care of simple news reading in Sept-Îles during the weekends than I am today in Quebec to take care of parliamentary activities. and provide news coverage to certain sections of the population. I believed in myself and I took advantage of the opportunities that presented themselves by provoking them more often than not. In the future, well, I will do the same again.

I have already said and here I am quoting myself: "I have learned with life that what is said to be forbidden is not always so. For me in any case, the forbidden does not exist on the condition of be honest and respecting others."

And I want to add the last sentences to this book by recalling, without wanting to shout at the prophet, the parable of the "talents" in the Bible. The worst thing you can do in life is to bury your talent lest it break. If God or someone else has given us abilities then we should try to improve them and increase their value. Only in this way will the donors will be fulfilled and can we come closer to happiness.

And finally, I say that it doesn't matter whether you're a journalist, a salesman, a laborer, or a simple night watchman; the important thing is to be fully what we are!

Bernard Bujold

National Assembly of Quebec - February 1979



Archives des dernières pages de la version originale du livre

.../ 150

Et on peut aussi dire que l'on vit pleinement notre vie et que l'on en gaspille aucun moment.

Car vivre c'est se déplacer, chercher, apprendre, connaître et foncer en plus bien sûr de s'accorder calmement certains moments de repos et de détente.

On me demande souvent si je ferai toujours du journalisme surtout en considérant le fait que j'y ai débuté très jeune et que j'ai réussi à obtenir certains succès ?

Question à laquelle je peux difficilement répondre.

Une grande dame américaine a dit :

" C'est un des aspects étranges de la nature humaine que nous soyons toujours prêts à attendre le mieux et que nous oublions de craindre le pire, en dépit, des leçons de l'expérience.

Les hommes sont apparemment destinés à rester optimistes. Oserait-on mettre des enfants au monde, s'appliquer à les élever et faire pour eux des projets d'avenir si on se rappelait que toute heure à venir recèle l'inconnu et que pour nous tous, individu, famille et communauté et même nation; il n'est peut-être aucun avenir sur terre. "

Rose Kennedy.

Si une personne à certains moments de son existence a pu croire être heureuse et penser que la providence, le sort ou encore le destin comme il vous plaira de le nommer; l'avait choisi pour la combler de faveur c'est bien cette dame.

Elle a dû voir, malgré les grands moments de joie de sa vie, ses fils assassinés devant la nation et leur empire familial continuellement la proie des dieux.

Toutefois cette même dame disait aussi et là je cite :

...../ 151

" Nul n'est exempt d'épreuves dans l'existence et si on se croit spécialement marqué par le malheur, on se trompe, d'autres ont souffert bien plus et ce ne sont pas les larmes qui rendent la souffrance supportable mais la volonté. "

Personnellement je suis encore très jeune et j'ai sûrement une longue liste de problèmes qui m'attendent patiemment et que je devrai affronter et vaincre si je veux connaître le succès ou tout simplement vivre ma vie.

La vie est tellement courte qu'il faut en vivre tous les moments et essayer de connaître toutes les expériences possibles.

Il faut cependant agir prudemment surtout lorsque l'on s'est engagé sur une voie et que l'on commence concrètement à donner une forme à notre empire.

Il ne faut pas abandonner une oeuvre à moitié terminée.

On ne doit pas changer d'emploi pour le simple plaisir mais parce qu'ainsi on améliorera notre situation personnelle et que l'on aidera l'ensemble de la société à mieux être.

Je citerai encore une phrase de Rose Kennedy :

" Chacun devrait participer au bien public, pour son pays,
et pour l'humanité entière" .

Participer au bien public pour moi signifie faire bien ce que l'on a à faire.

Que ce soit balayeur de rue, commis dans un magasin ou journaliste.

On a déjà dit : " Il n'y a pas de sots métiers il n'y a que de sottes gens. "

C'est un peu vrai.

Personnellement j'aime le journalisme .

Régulièrement je reçois ,presque qu'à chaque mois souvent chaque semaine, des offres d'emploi nouveau.

Certaines proviennent du milieu journalistique d'autres du monde des affaires ou du sport.

Je dois choisir et dans bien des cas je refuse.

Dans d'autres aussi ce sont les employeurs qui me refusent.

Mais l'important n'est pas là.

L'important est dans le courage de foncer.

Cette même Rose Kennedy, pour qui j'ai beaucoup d'estime comme d'ailleurs pour toute la famille Kennedy, racontait un jour cette histoire qui peut aussi bien s'adresser à nous gaspésiens, québécois ou autres qu'à sa famille:

"Chez-nous du côté des Kennedy, les ancêtres, étaient des gens pauvres qui n'avaient pas mérité leur sort misérable, mais ils possédaient l'imagination, la volonté et l'énergie nécessaire pour améliorer leurs conditions d'existence et celles de leur famille.

Leur ardeur au travail et leur persévérance leur permettaient de supporter toutes les épreuves le regard tourné vers l'avenir et ils savaient faire des projets et saisir la chance quand elle passait à leur portée, la provoquer au besoin."

Si j'ai voulu écrire cet ouvrage et le dédier à tous les jeunes qui le liront c'est pour leur démontrer clairement que peu importe son origine, sa famille, sa fortune ou quoi que ce soit ; il est possible de modifier son destin et d'obtenir face à cette vie des victoires personnelles.

Moi-même je n'étais pas favorisé d'aucune façon pas plus pour m'occuper des simples lectures de nouvelles durant les fins de semaine que je ^{ne} le suis aujourd'hui pour m'occuper des activités parlementaires et fournir une couverture journalistique à certaines parties de la population.

J'ai cru en moi et j'ai profité des occasions qui s'offraient en les provoquant

plus souvent qu'à mon tour.
Pour l'avenir et bien je ferai encore de même.

J'ai déjà dit et là je me cite :

" J'ai appris avec la vie que ce que l'on dit interdit
ne l'est pas toujours.
Pour moi en tous cas l'interdit n'existe pas à condition
d'être honnête et de respecter autrui. "

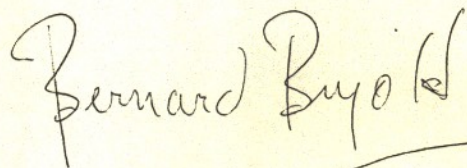
Et je veux ajouter les dernières phrases à ce livre en rappelant, sans vouloir
crier au prophète, la parabole des "talents" dans la bible.

La pire chose que l'on peut faire dans la vie c'est d'enfouir son talent de peur
qu'il se brise.

Si Dieu ou quelqu'un d'autre nous a donné des habilités alors il nous faut tenter
de les améliorer et d'en augmenter la valeur.

Ce n'est que de cette façon que l'on répondra à la volonté du donateur et que nous
pourrons nous rapprocher du bonheur.

Et je dis enfin que peu importe d'être journaliste, vendeur, manoeuvre ou simple
gardien de nuit; l'important c'est d'être pleinement ce que l'on est .



Bernard Bujold.

**COMMENT JE SUIS DEVENU
JOURNALISTE À L'ASSEMBLÉE
NATIONALE DU QUÉBEC?**

Par Bernard Bujold (1979)



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ISBN Number: 978-2-9821854-3-2

**Legal Deposit Bibliothèque et Archives nationale du Québec
Comment je suis devenu journaliste à l'Assemblée nationale du
Québec - (First paper edition 1979)**

Digital Edition Published September 1, 2023

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