The October Crisis

Appendix Y

The Roles of the Participants in Retrospect

"The worth of the State, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it."

(John Stuart Mill 1806-1873)

"History is the biography of great men." (Thomas Carlyle, 1795-1881)

The heroes, villains, players and passers-by of the Crisis

People make history or at least shape it. Certain persons played very leading parts in the October Crisis. The following is a critical and very personal evaluation of the roles of the principal players.

I. **Pierre Laporte** (27 February 1921 – 17 October 1970)

The death of Laporte was a public and private tragedy

One must firstly conclude that the murder of Pierre Laporte was senseless, cruel and evil. It took, at the prime of life, a devoted husband, father, colleague and friend of so many people. He was the best parliamentarian in the National Assembly, where orators abound as in

no other parliament in Canada. He was the loyal lieutenant of Bourassa, his much younger and less experienced rival, who had defeated him in the leadership race that same year. He was a journalist and author who cared for the elegance of the French language and the quality of everything he wrote in French and English. Despite his accomplishments, he was far from his prime personally or at the peak of his career as a politician, armed as he was with great energy, judgment and experience. His already extensive body of writings was only a beginning; he had not even begun to explore his multitudinous files and experiences, in a public life which had been so rich and varied. What would he have produced, had he been allowed to follow up on his text on Duplessis (which cost him dearly at the time) and had he written on his experiences with Jean Lesage, Daniel Johnson, Jean-Jacques Bertrand, Robert Bourassa, René Lévesque and Jacques Parizeau? And Laporte was in effect a much better writer on politics and history than all of the foregoing and many others. The only active politician/writer at the time, who surpassed Laporte, in my opinion, was Gérard Pelletier, who was consistently without peer. Trudeau wrote beautifully before entering politics in 1965, see “La Grève de l’amiante”, 1956, while his “Memoirs”, 1993 show flashes of what, he still could do, when inclined. Trudeau’s expository writing after 1965, however, was usually uninspired and written with assistance from others.

The death of Pierre Laporte, at age 49, was monstrous and an incalculable loss, not only to the victim, but to his wife, his family, to Quebec, and to Canada. The only other political assassination in Canada was in Ottawa of Thomas d’Arcy McGee, M.P. (1843-1868) on 9 April 1868. McGee was shot by Fenian, P.J. Whelan, because Mc Gee had just made an uplifting speech for Canadian unity.

What would Laporte's contribution have been to the federalism/separatism debate pitting the Parti Liberal du Québec versus the Parti Québécois? In my view, it would have been very significant, and he had not already made a very considerable contribution.

Pierre Laporte and René Lévesque

A comparison of Pierre Laporte and René Lévesque is revelatory of great similarities and differences. In October 1970, Laporte was age 49 (born Montreal, 27 February 1921), Lévesque was age 48 (born 24 August 1922, in Campbellford, New Brunswick, there being no hospital near his home town of New Carlisle, Gaspé). Laporte was the son of a doctor, Lévesque, the son of a lawyer.

Both studied law, but neither was really attracted to "the law." Lévesque was expelled from law school in December 1943, while in third year at Laval University, when caught smoking in the classroom by the celebrated and feared professor Louis-Philippe Pigeon, who later sat in the Supreme Court of Canada from 1967 to 1980. Lévesque refused to apologize, as required by the Law Faculty and never went back to law school, being more attracted to journalism. **"Listen, I'm not interested in passing those exams, because I'll never practice. All I want to do in life is to write, nothing else."** (Jean Provencher, 1975 at p. 42) Laporte kept on his law studies at University of Montreal, and after considerable coaching from friends, passed the Bar Exams in 1945. That year he married Françoise Brouillette. He never practised law, but became a journalist.

Laporte and Lévesque were both excellent journalists. Laporte wrote extensively of Duplessis and the Union Nationale for Le Devoir and was barred from the press gallery of the National Assembly by Duplessis. In 1958, as a reporter for Le Devoir, he revealed the scandal

of Quebec Natural Gas (many Union Nationale ministers had received shares in the company). In March 1960, he published a scathing but subtle book about Duplessis, “Le vrai visage de Duplessis.” These writings were a major cause in the defeat of the Union Nationale at the election of 22 June 1960.

Lévesque did not particularly attack Duplessis, but his presence on the Lesage team contributed to the Liberal victory in 1960. Lévesque’s fame came as a war reporter and then at Radio Canada in particular, when he led the producers’ strike against Radio Canada in 1958-59. He was also a famed and very effective TV personality on “Point de Mire.” His programming was more on social affairs than provincial political matters or the transgressions of the Union Nationale.

Lévesque joined the Liberals in 1960 and from 1960 to 1966 was a Minister, becoming a major player in the Liberal government, along with Jean Lesage, Paul Gérin-Lajoie and Eric Kierans. Laporte on the other hand only entered politics in a by-election on 14 December 1961 and was not in the limelight until later as Minister of Municipal Affairs (1962-1966), when he was responsible for the unification of all the municipalities on Isle Laval. In 1965, he became Minister of Cultural Affairs, and showed his nationalist colours when he orchestrated liens between Quebec and France with the signing of an accord between the two jurisdictions.

Laporte was a very talented parliamentarian and a much better speaker in the House than Lévesque, while Lévesque was much better on Radio or TV or in a set speech. Prime Minister Jean Lesage named Laporte Parliamentary Leader of the Government in 1962. He became the strongest debater in the Legislative Assembly and then the National Assembly, when its name was changed on 1 January 1969.

Pierre Laporte in 1970

After the election of 29 April 1970, Laporte was named Parliamentary Leader, Labour Minister and Immigration Minister by Bourassa. He was never Vice-Premier, although most texts films and radio and TV presentations describe him as such. In the spring and summer of 1970 Laporte as Labour Minister took on the construction industry problems and strike, which had been a festering sore for the Union Nationale government of Jean-Jacques Bertrand. By skillful negotiations, Laporte brought the parties together and after Parliamentary commissions and heated debates in the National Assembly, he was able to reach a settlement to the satisfaction of both labour and industry and to adopt Bill 38 (The Construction Act) with the unanimous consent and admiration of all political parties. Adoption was at 6:42 p.m. on Saturday evening, 8 August 1970, when Jean-Jacques Bertrand, Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Union Nationale, Fernand Dumont, for the Crédit Social and Camille Laurin, parliamentary leader of the Parti Québécois, spoke very, highly of his achievement. (Debates, August 1970 at p. 1377)

What future public role would Laporte have played had he not been murdered?

What role would Laporte have played against Lévesque and separatism? Unlike Lévesque, Gérin-Lajoie, Wagner and Kierans, he did not leave the Quebec Liberal Party during the years following the defeat of 1966, but was an ardent and energetic member of the Party.

Laporte had one shadow on his reputation. It was rumoured he was connected to the Mafia, because he was apparently $100,000.00 in debt, as a result of the leadership campaign won by Bourassa on 19 January 1970. Police wiretaps had caught conversations between the

Mafia and two Laporte aids – a fundraiser and his Executive Assistant in the Ministry of Immigration. (Brian McKenna and Susan Purcell, 1980 at pp. 251 and 252)

Laporte was also accused of having received benefits from a tractor deal, accusations which never got past the rumour level. Finally, in the National Assembly, Laporte put an end to the rumours, when he said that he wished to reply to his "détracteurs." Both sides of the Assembly laughed and the question was never raised again. In 1981, the Keable Commission, which was instructed to enquire into corruption, refuted the allegations against Laporte, but unfortunately long after Laporte's death.

When Bourassa formed his cabinet in the first two weeks of May 1970, Laporte reportedly wanted to be Minister of Justice, but Bourassa had been told of the wiretaps and named Laporte to two ministries - Labour and Immigration - which gave Laporte two chauffeurs, one in Quebec and one in Montreal.

Who would have been more esteemed by history had Laporte lived? Laporte or Bourassa? Laporte or Lévesque? Laporte or Parizeau? Laporte or Lesage? Both Bourassa (1970-1976 and 1985-1994) and Lévesque (1960-66 and 1976–1985) had two successful political stages to their careers. Laporte never had that chance. And would Bourassa or Lévesque have been as dominant in the second half of their careers had Laporte been alive?

Laporte the author

Laporte's text "Le vrai visage de Duplessis" is a masterpiece of mordantly funny, understated, elegant writing. Relying on his enormous collection of papers, clippings and files, Laporte wrote evenly and fairly of Duplessis, recounting documented anecdote after documented anecdote to describe Duplessis' wit, which nevertheless was usually rude, even

cruel, whether addressed to members of his cabinet, supporters, friends or even foreign dignitaries. Nor has anyone described better than Laporte, the astute knowledge that Duplessis had of Quebec politics, and how it was always used to forward his own aims, which he assumed were Quebec's, even if they harmed the province.

Duplessis' mania for complete subservience of his ministers was told in a few words: **"Mr. Duplessis completely dominated his ministers. They only existed to satisfy his insatiable desire for power. That one member rather than another had the title of minister was of little importance, because Mr. Duplessis was the beginning and end all. On some questions relating to their areas of competence, he did not even consult them."**
(My translation, Pierre Laporte, 1960 at p. 63)

Laporte was also able to describe Duplessis' singleness of purpose and dedication by a single Duplessis declaration: **"I do not have a family. I have no other responsibilities, other than the well-being of Quebec. I belong entirely to the province of Quebec."**

Laporte put this into a syllogism:

"I am indispensable to the province of Quebec.

"So, being indispensable, I must take measures to stay in its service.

"Therefore, I am justified in taking all the necessary means to keep power."
(My translation; Pierre Laporte, 1960 at p. 27)

Laporte again was able to sum up Duplessis in two sentences: **"*General* Duplessis … was the only person in step! What rational thinking was there in such a mind-set?"** (My translation; Pierre Laporte, 1960 at p. 21)

Laporte was not mean-spirited, however, and at the end of the book he wrote of

Duplessis' death with delicacy. Laporte noted, in his very spare, unlarded style, of which any writer would be envious: **"One day a colleague commented: 'I ask myself when is this nightmare going to end!'…It finished abruptly September 7, 1959. Yet even the journalists who dreamed of the day were saddened by the news."** (My translation; Pierre Laporte, 1960 at p. 137)

"Le vrai vissage de Duplessis" was an incisive, anecdotal history which, in almost every way, surpasses anything else on the "Chef", in particular Conrad Black's unstinting homage to Duplessis.

Laporte the journalist

For fifteen years Laporte was a journalist for Le Devoir, much of it spent in the National Assembly. He was much more than a courageous investigative reporter. He went one step further and considered himself to be "un journaliste de combat", who was nevertheless able to be neutral. It was in those years that he was able to judge Duplessis.

"A combat journalist, attached to a daily newspaper, which was independent politically, but which always prided itself upon being neutral, I have been called upon during the last fifteen years - since about 1945 – to judge Duplessis' actions almost daily. This piecework will one day be woven together by researchers and by historians." (My translation; Pierre Laporte, 1960 at p. 7)

Laporte, nevertheless, was very modest of his own courageous stand against Duplessis Thus when writing of Duplessis, having forbidden him admission to official press conferences, an outrage that was noticed far outside Quebec, Laporte only said:

"One day, it was discreetly said to me 'that my behaviour went too far' and that

the storm was going to break if I did not 'mend my ways'. I persevered in my 'error' with the result that everyone became aware of the treatment accorded me: sharp public remarks in the Legislative Assembly, suppression of rights generally granted to other journalists, exclusion from press conferences.

Let it be understood that I do not stress these events, which only concern me personally. I consider them simply as another part of the file on Mr. Duplessis' relationship with reporters. Those who would like more complete details – or more juicy ones – can consult the newspapers of February 1955." (My translation; Pierre Laporte, 1960 at p. 134)

Would any other journalist then or any journalist today describes his personal expulsion by the Prime Minister from the legislative Assembly or from the National Assembly or any parliament in such modest and tempered terms?

Laporte's hidden quality - he could always adjust, he never gave up

It was not really acknowledged how much Laporte was able to evolve and adjust to changes in his circumstances and in society. He was flexible in his ideas, much more than Lesage, Lévesque and to some extent Bourassa.

Although his years as a journalist were not remunerative or glorious, his enthusiasm and energy never waned. Even after being defeated by Bourassa for the Liberal Party leadership in 1970, he became Bourassa's most loyal, important and effective minister, having two ministries and being Parliamentary leader in the National Assembly as well. Claude Wagner, who was the third candidate for the leadership, accepted a judgeship from the Union Nationale government and later became a federal Conservative.

II. **James R. Cross** (born 29 September 1921)

James R. Cross, a British diplomat, was age 49 when kidnapped and acted throughout his imprisonment with the greatest of calm and courage. Apparently, the FLQ members who imprisoned Cross became very sympathetic towards him. They were especially surprised to learn that he was not English, but had been born in Negagh, Ireland. After his release, Cross acted with the same dignity and circumspection.

Cross was never appropriately honoured for the courage and dignity which he displayed during the Crisis either by Quebec, the Federal Government or by his own Government in London. This is very unfortunate.

At the time of writing, Cross is alive and well in the south of England, still very serene and modest in his responses to occasional questions by the press, as was the case recently when a new film about the Crisis was released.

III. **Robert Bourassa** (14 July 1933 – 2 October 1996)

Bourassa the very private, but personable individual

Robert Bourassa was a much more remarkable person than his outward persona gave evidence of. He had a full complement of defects like us all, but his accomplishments, for the most part, have gone unsung. On the other hand, Lévesque and Trudeau were deemed very charismatic,

and their lives and achievements have been more properly described. The legislation adopted in Bourassa's two terms of office far outstrips that of any Quebec prime minister who followed him and probably any before him, with the possible exception of Jean Lesage.

Bourassa was able to attract strong people around him and his rise from being an obscure backbencher in the Opposition in 1966 to leader of the Quebec Liberal Party and Prime Minister of Quebec at age 36, all in less than four years, is unequalled by any of his contemporaries, including Lesage, Lévesque, Parizeau, Bouchard, Landry, or Charest. He had a very attractive persona and was very human and personable in small groups or one on one. He was by far the least ostentatious of any of the Quebec leaders that I knew in the last 50 years. He lead an impeccable family and personal life. His re-election as prime minister in 1985, after the defeat of 1976 is unparalleled in Quebec history.

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Bourassa's modest lifestyle

From 1966 to the middle of the October Crisis, Bourassa lived at the very modest Victoria Hotel on rue St. Jean in old Quebec. He had an $8.00 a night room and lived there as a MNA and even as Prime Minister of Quebec until the Sûreté du Quebec, who guarded him during the Crisis would not stay there because it was beneath the level they were afforded under their collective agreement. After the leadership campaign in early 1970, when Bourassa defeated Pierre Laporte and Claude Wagner, Laporte came to the platform and pledged his support. Wagner would not and a few days later Bourassa and Wagner agreed to meet privately. They met alone in Bourassa's hotel room and Wagner sat on the only chair and Bourassa on the bed. Bourassa told me that Wagner, the self-declared representative of the people had said: "Is this any way for the future Prime Minister of Quebec to live?" Bourassa moved into the Prime Minister's residence in the

bunker and lived there very happily as did Lévesque and Lucien Bouchard. Jacques Parizeau had an ornate residence outside the walls and Landry built a luxurious Prime Minister's residence at the top of the Price Building. Premier Jean Charest continues to live there.

Bourassa did not care for luxury, but he had a full-time barber, because he was told while getting his weekly haircut at the Ritz hotel barbershop, that his hair had been untidy the night before on television. On the spot, he hired the barber's assistant, who also acted as a bodyguard. Bourassa also had a chauffeur and never learned to drive. Having a chauffeur and a barber, were considered essential for him to do his job fully and properly. Living in an $8.00 per night hotel room, however also complied with his needs. Married to Andrée Simard of Sorel, they lived well, but comparatively modestly. They were a happy devoted couple, until his death by cancer in 1996.

Trudeau, in an off-the-cuff speech he was to immediately regret, once called Bourassa **"un mangeur de hotdogs"** because that day they had met at the last minute for a brief lunch on the roof of the Bunker and Bourassa, with the appetite of a teenager, had eaten four or five hotdogs. The lunch also included a very good wine. Bourassa could also eat very, very well as he did late every night in one of the best restaurants of Quebec with his staff. He was also very generous and had a superb dinner-dance every year for the whole Liberal caucus (over 100 persons and their spouses) at a country hotel, which he would take over.

May I add that no one, I ever knew in public life, had a life-style permitting him to comment on Bourassa's private life. As for Bourassa, I never heard him say anything unkind, either publicly or privately, about the private life of anyone else.

<u>Bourassa - the years of preparation</u>

Bourassa like Laporte, Lévesque and Trudeau studied law, and like Trudeau, Bourassa graduated first in his class at the University of Montreal in 1956. He joined the Quebec bar in 1957, but did not consider law to be his profession. Rather he obtained a Master's degree from Harvard in Economics and Political Science and a Master's degree in Finance from Oxford. From 1960-63, he was Counsel to the Minister of Revenue of Canada and taught Finance at the University of Ottawa at the same time. From 1963-1965, he was Secretary of the Bélanger Commission on Economic and Fiscal matters.

Bourassa and Bourgault

Bourassa could also do acts of kindness without fanfare. For example, it was Bourassa in 1976, who rescued Pierre Bourgault (the ardent separatist) from obscurity and poverty after Bourgault was forced out of the Parti Québécois.

As Josée Legault said, when writing of Pierre Bourgault at the time of his death, **"After his close friends tried to help him, it was Robert Bourassa, a man who respected adversaries he knew were respectable, who got him a position as professor of communications at UQAM."** (The Gazette, 18 June 2003) Bourgault declared afterwards that this post saved his life. (Tristan Péloquin, Le Devoir, 17 June 2003). Bourgault, it must be added, proved to be an outstanding professor. Bourassa also provided Bourgault with translation work when Bourgault was virtually destitute and on welfare. Bourassa's kindnesses never became known publicly until both Bourgault and Bourassa had died.

Bourassa the Prime Minister

During his first Government from 1970 to 1976, Bourassa helped turn around the economic slide of Quebec from 1966 to 1970 and continued the social advances of Daniel Johnson and Jean-Jacques Bertrand. He courageously reversed the decision taken by Bertrand in Bill 63 (language of education), by the adoption of Bill 22 (French, the official language). Not the least of his achievements was the handling of the October Crisis.

Incredible dedication, stamina and calm

What qualities did Bourassa show at that time of the October Crisis? Incredible stamina, incredible coolness, reason rather than emotion or signs of strain were just some of the qualities he exhibited during that time. He was careful and deliberate in reaching a consensus, and never hesitant when he believed it was time to take a decision. In particular, his pronouncements and the language he chose were moderate and not intended to excite the public or to inflame the situation at hand. He maintained the same moderation with members of his cabinet and caucus and they reacted accordingly.

Willingness to listen to others, ponder and take a decision

Bourassa also had a willingness to listen to everyone. He would then make his own decision, at the right time, after he had a consensus in Cabinet, in the persons around him and from all sorts of people outside. At the height of the Crisis, he called in Camille Laurin, Parliamentary leader of the PQ (Lévesque was not available); Camille Samson, leader of the Social Credit Party; and Jean-Jacques Bertrand, leader of the Official Opposition and spoke to them on Monday, 12 October 1970 at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel. (see my diary at 12 October 1970 in Chapter 4 of the present text.) Bourassa telephoned René Lévesque at least twice, during the Crisis. He was

constantly on the telephone, getting opinions and letting editorialists such as Claude Ryan give their views. At the same time, he was the doctor of spin, perhaps one of the first spin-doctors, years before President Clinton and Prime Minister Tony Blair. Bourassa's telephone calls were used as much for planting the seeds of his ideas with the persons he called as they were to learn from those persons. It was a dual process. The consultation, however, resulted in some people thinking he was weak or could not make up his mind. Claude Ryan, for example, thought Bourassa's consulting of him at the time of the October Crisis was a sign of weakness, and went on to discuss with others the formation of a "coalition government". On the contrary, it was one of Bourassa's greatest strengths - consult, listen, ponder and then decide.

Bourassa during the Crisis

Bourassa was the most important person in the Crisis after Laporte and Cross. During the Crisis, Bourassa insisted that we sit as a full Cabinet on every crisis question and that we make the difficult decisions together. Arriving at a consensus with over twenty persons was time-consuming and often difficult. The long meetings from Sunday afternoon, 11 October to Tuesday, 13 October, were a learning process, where we arrived at a unanimous decision in less than three days. Thereafter, we met as a full cabinet on all crisis matters. Meeting as a whole Cabinet resulted in the success of the position we took. It was a long, difficult, necessary process – there could be no second-guessing once the Cabinet decision was taken.

It is interesting that Trudeau's decisions on the Crisis were taken in Cabinet; but he also seemed to act by his own intuition or by a small Cabinet committee of himself, Turner, Sharpe, Pelletier and Marchand.

Bourassa never lost his calm during the Crisis or in his reminiscences and writings afterwards. The recorded answers to the unedited and piercing questions posed by Raymond Saint-Pierre, director of information of radio station CKAC, give a picture of a dignified reasoned person in control of himself and the situation (Raymond Saint-Pierre, 1977). The same is true of Bourassa during the very critical examination of him by a host of law professors, political scientists and others in "Gouverner le Québec", Robert Bourassa, 1995. (For a summary, see my book review, Gazette, 9 September 1995).

Bourassa and René Lévesque

Only on very few occasions in the 30 years that I knew Bourassa, did I ever notice him being even slightly acerbic, while publicly he was very rarely harsh and never mean-spirited. A comparison with Lévesque would be very revealing. Herewith are the only recorded examples that I have been able to discover of Bourassa being publicly critical of the actions of someone.

In a recorded radio interview of Bourassa by Raymond Saint-Pierre of CKAC, Bourassa was to say: **"As for the private conversation that I had with Mr. Lévesque and that he had the questionable kindness to record without telling me…"** (My translation; Raymond Saint-Pierre, 1977 at p. 27)

Le Devoir noted on 26 November 1970**:**

> **Premier Robert Bourassa declared Tuesday during an interview, that the leader of the Parti Québécois, Mr. René Lévesque had resorted to lying in order to "preserve his hold over Quebec" and to discredit the Liberal Party. Nonetheless, the premier**

added, the "negative and bitter attacks" of the PQ leader during the October Crisis did more harm than good to the Parti Québécois.

Mr. Bourassa in particular described as "completely false" three statements that Mr. Lévesque had made on the weekend during a televised program.

"I never told him that the Council of Ministers was divided", maintained the premier. "That is completely untrue."

"Mr. Lévesque said that the ministers locked themselves up in their basements, and were afraid to leave. That is completely untrue."

"He said that he [Lévesque] never requested protection by the police. That is completely untrue. He requested police protection." (My translation)

Bourassa went on to note that the request for protection had been made by one of Lévesque's assistants at Lévesque's request. In the minutes, incidentally, of the Parti Québécois National Council of 18 October 1970, there is talk of protecting Lévesque and a resolution adopted to have PQ members act as bodyguards for members of the PQ Executive and others. (See Appendix "M")

IV. **Pierre Elliott Trudeau** (18 October 1919 – 28 September 2000)

A central role

Pierre Elliott Trudeau, as Prime Minister of Canada, played a very central role in the Crisis, although not at the very tip of the spear like Bourassa. From the beginning he was firm in his

attitude towards the terrorist kidnappers, but he also realized that the Quebec Government had the major, hands-on role. He called the Army into Ottawa and left Quebec to call it in two days later. He favoured the imposition of the War Measures Act, but waited for the City of Montreal and the Government of Quebec to make written requests to him under the law. (See in general Appendix "R" for the account of a discussion I had with Trudeau, in 1999, on the Crisis)

Strong but judicious position during the Crisis

During the Crisis, Trudeau took a strong position against the FLQ terrorists, but was judicious in his public pronouncements and was able to privately restrain his caucus and Cabinet. The only exception was Jean Marchand, his Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, whose intemperate remarks were apparently the object of a rebuke by Trudeau.

Trudeau understood the danger of the War Measures Act and the strategy of the FLQ:

"The incitation of the government into evoking emergency measures can become a trap prepared by extremists to ensnare the government. It is a well-known tactic of groups who are trying to destroy society by violence, to force governments to harden their stand. The extremists then call upon these appearances of authoritarianism as justification for a renewed outbreak of their attacks against social structures." (My translation; Address to the Canadian nation, 16 October 1970)

Freedom of the press

Trudeau also respected freedom of the press and for example told Laurent Picard, Executive Vice-President of the CBC, who wanted to have the FLQ manifesto read on radio and television, that he respected the independence of Radio-Canada but retained the right to call Picard

a fool in Parliament. Trudeau was above the press or considered himself to be. For example, he antagonized Claude Ryan because he refused to submit himself to the obligatory interview conducted by Ryan and his editors at Le Devoir of every prime minister or aspiring prime minister.

Once Trudeau told me that he never read Le Devoir, because he could guess what they were going to say the next morning. When he announced he was leaving politics he paraphrased Richard Nixon, who when leaving after his California defeat had said **"At least you won't have me to kick around any more."** Trudeau turned it around and said to the assembled reporters in Ottawa: **"At least, I won't have you to kick around any more."**

The difference between decision making and participation

Trudeau understood the difference between participation and decision-making. He asked for views but took the decisions he had authority to take. Before the Crisis, Trudeau had said:

"If you don't want to arouse hopes you will be unable to satisfy, you must always distinguish between participation and the decision-making process. If we don't keep this distinction always in mind, the result will be the destruction of the democratic system." (Pierre E. Trudeau, Address at the University of Malaysia, 21 May 1970, Gérard Pelletier English, 1971 at p. 44.)

René Lévesque and Claude Ryan wanted to make decisions. They did not understand that they had not been elected, yet wanted to be involved in the decision-making process.

Understanding Trudeau - "Faire contrepoids"

To understand how Trudeau acted during the October Crisis, one must understand his lack of a formal agenda, as well as his simultaneous support of federalism and French Canadian

nationalism. The way he acted, at any time, depended on the circumstances of the moment. His "devise politique" was expressed in the following words: **"My political action, or my theory, – insomuch as I can be said to have one – can be expressed very simply: create a counterweight."** (Pierre Elliott Trudeau, (English) 1968 at p. xxiii) **"The only constant factor to be found in my thinking over the years has been opposition to accepted opinions."** (Pierre Elliott Trudeau, (English) 1968 at p. xix)

This is as close as one can get incidentally to the classic definition of an intellectual. (See Intellectuals infra.)

Trudeau the French-Canadian nationalist

Trudeau was first of all a French Canadian nationalist: **"I would be a French Canadian by adoption, if I was not already one by birth."** (My translation; Pierre Elliott Trudeau 1967, on the cover). Trudeau understood, and declared, his view of the unfair treatment French Canadians in Canada: **"It seems quite evident to me that the English-speaking majority has behaved, historically, as though French Canadians were merely one of the country's ethnic minorities, with a few special privileges. The most striking example of this attitude occurs in the federal civil service, where English is, to all intents and purposes, the only working language. In the past the Department of External Affairs has built up an image of Canada as a unilingual, English country. I could almost say the same of the other departments and crown corporations. The federal capital is an English capital. The Canadian army is an English army in which French Canadians have to overcome serious handicaps, especially from the linguistic point of view.**

With regard to language and education, French Canadians in other provinces do

not enjoy rights comparable to those of Quebec's English Canadians. This is true even of New Brunswick, where Acadians constitute two-fifths of the population.

The C.B.C., despite all its efforts in the past years, has not yet managed to extend its French radio and televisions network from coast to coast.

Many companies established in Quebec have not respected the language and culture of their employees, nor those of the population. French Canadians have been, and often still are, in an inferior position as far as hiring and promotion are concerned." (Québec and the Constitutional Problem, 1965 in Pierre Elliott Trudeau, (English) 1968 at p. 5)

Trudeau nevertheless believed that, in the long-run, there were two indestructible ethnic groups in Canada, **"The dice are cast in Canada: there are two ethnic and linguistic groups; each one too strong to be able to crush the other…If English Canadians do not see that, too bad for them."** (My translation; Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1967, on the cover)

"That Quebec is a distinct society is totally obvious. The inhabitants of the province live in a territory defined by its borders. The majority speak French. They are governed under a particular system of laws. And these realities have been pivotal in the development of a culture which is uniquely theirs." (Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1992 at p. 266)

"That is why I have always opposed the notions of special status and distinct society. With the Quiet Revolution, Quebec became an adult and its inhabitants have no need of favors or privileges to face life's challenges and to take their rightful place within Canada and in the world at large." (Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1996 at p. 288)

Trudeau, the intellectual, was also a pragmatist and became an activist intellectual in 1965 entering federal politics on the side of the political party in power – the Federal Liberal Party, leaving behind the New Democratic Party (NDP). This gained him the eternal animosity

of armchair intellectuals, who give advice, but who are usually reluctant to and incapable of holding office in their local tennis club, let alone suffer the slings and arrows in the elected political arena.

Trudeau, unlike any other modern Canadian leader could analyse, understand and criticize both French and English Canadians with incredible insight. Herewith, in two pithy sentences was a view on his fellow Canadians: **"History shows us that French Canadians have not really believed in democracy for themselves, and that English Canadians did not really want it for others. The feeling of superiority has never ceased to characterize the attitude of English Canadians vis-à-vis French Canadians."** (My translation; Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1967, on the cover)

"Just watch me"

Shortly before the emergency powers were invoked, Trudeau became involved in a debate with two broadcast correspondents as he was leaving the House. Although the remarks were off-the cuff, which is dangerous for any politician, let alone in the heat of a major crisis, he was able to clearly express his position.

> **"I think it's natural that if people are being abducted that they be protected against such abduction."**
>
> **"This isn't my choice, obviously. You know, I think it's more important to get rid of those who are committing violence against the total society and those who are trying to run the government through a parallel power by establishing their authority by kidnapping and blackmail. There's a lot of bleeding hearts around that just don't like**

to see people with helmets and guns. All I can say is 'go on and bleed'. But it's more important to keep law and order in society than to be worried about weak-kneed people who don't like the looks of an army."

"At any cost?" he was asked. "How far would you go with that? How far would you extend that?"

"Just watch me," Mr. Trudeau replied. "… I think that society must take every means at its disposal to defend itself against the emergence of a parallel power which defies the elected power in this country …. So long as there is a power here which is challenging the elected representatives of the people, then I think that power must be stopped. And I think it's only – I repeat – weak-kneed, bleeding hearts who are afraid to take these measures."(W.A. Wilson, 1975 at pp. 83-84)

Trudeau the person

My first real view close-up view of Trudeau was when he was the candidate, for the first time, in the very English-speaking constituency of Mount Royal in 1965. I was an alderman and lifelong resident of Town of Mount Royal, a suburb of Montreal, and we had been asked to host what may have been Trudeau's first coffee-party. My wife, Rosslyn, called me at the office to ask me to come home, because she was concerned that the 30 Anglo ladies, she had invited from the neighbourhood, might be a little frosty towards a French-Canadian candidate. The riding was very English-speaking and there had been a long line of MP's representing the riding, whose first language was English.

Trudeau, wearing sandals, a leather jacket and an open shirt, arrived sharp on time. I introduced him and without notes, he gave a very brief, logical and appealing resume of the

issues and his political views. He then asked for questions and a lady who was blind asked sternly, “What are you going to do for the blind?” He was able to cite the law concerning the blind and then to suggest what seemed to be very rational solutions to the various problems of the blind. The next lady was a professor at Sir George Williams College and she asked, “And what are you going to do for the professors?” Trudeau explained that he was a professor at the Université de Montréal and shared the same views on what should be done for higher education, which he explained in detail. As the questions continued, he used his wit, eloquence and very profound knowledge on so many subjects that the room warmed up and the ladies were without exception enraptured. When it was over, he got into his Mercedes convertible parked at the door and if he had said, “Who’s for a weekend in New York?” there would have been a crush of all of the ladies present, including the blind lady, trying to get into the car.

V **Jérôme Choquette** (born, 24 January 1928)

Unsung hero

The unsung hero of the October Crisis was Jérôme Choquette. From the beginning, he took the position that we could not give in to the terrorist demands, without comprising our leadership as the democratically elected government. Compromised as well would be the accepted principles of justice in a rational society. As he said, from the beginning, at his press conference as Minister of Justice of Quebec on 10 October 1970:

"No society can consent to have the decisions of its judicial and governmental institutions challenged or set aside by the blackmail of a minority, for that signifies the end of all social order." (My translation)

Jérôme Choquette the person:

Jérôme Choquette was an excellent student and graduated in law from McGill in 1949 at age 20. He was too young to take the Bar examinations and therefore studied for a year in Paris. After 1976 he went back to the practice of law, and of all the lawyers I know of who were in politics, he is the only one who was and is a real "avocat à la cour" still pleading in courts of first instance, in appeal and before the Supreme Court.

Choquette, however, understood human rights and it was he who brought down Quebec's first Bill of Rights in 1975. It was rewritten, when the PQ got into power and reissued over the signature of René Lévesque in 1977. I spoke to Jérôme about this recently and he shrugged his shoulders and said, "What do you expect?"

During the October Crisis, Choquette acted decisively and firmly, yet after the application of the War Measures Act, he brought in the services of the Quebec Ombudsman and provided the means whereby persons unjustly treated were fairly compensated. It is noteworthy that despite the great pressure he was under, he was calm and made no foolish statements or declarations.

Choquette saw the dilemma from the beginning

Choquette, the jurist, understood from the beginning the dilemma that we, the Quebec Government, the opposition parties and all leaders of society faced. His speech in the National Assembly during the debate on the Crisis is a triumph of concise, thoughtful and articulate

reasoning on why a democratic society cannot give in to terrorism. Herewith is an excerpt, where he referred to the position of the Parti Québécois and in particular Camille Laurin and René Lévesque:

"… the opportunistic acceptance of the conditions laid down by the FLQ would be a throwing overboard of all the principles of our democratic society, founded on the popular will and the respect of our impartial courts. Those who recommend flexible solutions for right now and tough ones for the future are presenting an evident contradiction."

"But, these advocates of non-violence" said Mr. Choquette, **"wouldn't they in fact be hawks under the excessively convenient plumage of doves? Behind the far too easy evasions of the Parti Québécois and its leader, in particular, is there not a political calculation aiming to undermine current democratic institutions? It appears evident to me."** (Debates, 13 November 1970 at pp.1556-9)

The speech of Choquette is a delicate, tribute to Pierre Laporte and to Cross and a long eloquent defence of liberty in a democratic society. Choquette explains the position governments must take when confronted by terrorists, and outlines in detail the actual actions of the Governments of Quebec and Canada. His speech is valuable reading even today. (Debates, 13 November 1970 at pp.1556-9)

VI. **Gérard Pelletier** (21 June 1919 – 22 June 1997)

Pelletier, writer, activist and politician

Gérard Pelletier took part in the Asbestos strike in 1949-50 with Marchand and Trudeau. In 1965 the three friends joined the Federal Liberal Party. All three were doers and Trudeau and Pelletier were also "intellectuals" in the Quebec model.

A master of language, Pelletier's writing on the October Crisis is by far the most elegant and reasoned of all the texts produced. He was in Trudeau's cabinet at the time as Secretary of State and yet was able to produce a most informative and balanced tome by the beginning of 1971 - La Crise d'Octobre, Editions Du Jour, 1971. It was translated by Joyce Marshall ("The October Crisis", 1971) Both volumes are collectors' items and well deserve to be so.

Pelletier and the Parti Québécois

Pelletier, like Jean-Paul Desbiens (another Editor of La Presse) immediately understood the roles that the FLQ, the PQ and the other participants in the Crisis. Herewith Pelletier's telling evaluation of the role of the Parti Québécois and of René Lévesque in October 1970:

"In fact, the Parti Québécois has carried on two types of opposition at once – one parliamentary, on which it has yet to cut its teeth properly; the other in the public arena, chiefly in the form of statements, press conferences, and articles by René Lévesque, whose style and vigour are well known. For the last few months, however, he seems at times to have allowed shouting to take the place of discourse." (Gérard Pelletier, English, 1971 at p. 45)

Pelletier on the FLQ's planned overthrow of government

"No one can come to power in Quebec except through democratic elections. It is

virtually impossible to imagine that a dictatorship could be imposed by force in Canada. It is therefore not power that the terrorists are seeking, but rather the disorganization of the existing government machinery and a violent confrontation between Anglophones and Francophones." Pelletier, English, 1971 at 175.

VII **Jean Marchand** (20 December 1918 – 28 August 1998)

Jean Marchand, a long-time labour movement leader, who was a legitimate leader at the Asbestos strike, took the FLQ threat seriously, perhaps too seriously. Nevertheless his comments were made on the spot, not afterwards in the leisure of the living-room or the university common room. Of all the elected political leaders of the time, he was one of the few who had been active in the labour movement as a career, who had led strikes.

Who of the sixteen eminent personalities, other than Michel Chartrand, took part in the Asbestos strike for example?

Marchand over-estimates the FLQ

Marchand knew the left wing, and the revolutionary mentality of some of its leaders of that time. Did Marchand overact? Certainly he overestimated how the labour movement in general would react, but he understood Michel Chartrand and the Marxist fringe of the labour movement. Marchand also erred, as to the number of FLQ members, which he put at 3000.

Marchand did not overestimate the "enjeu" of the left, however

Marchand understood that for the extreme left, the end justifies the means. Thus on 7 February 1971, Marchand said at a Liberal Party of Canada forum:

"Thus one can attack the police with stones, acid or Molotov cocktails, but if one defends oneself or counter-attacks there are cries of repression, brutality or facism. One may address the worst of accusations against the leaders of our society. But if they have the compunction to reply, that is immediately deemed to be violence, provocation 'an insult of the people'. They may qualify us as 'traitors', but if we have the audacity to say of certains groups that they are playing the game of the FLQ, we immediately become reactionaries."

VIII **Rene Lévesque** (24 August 1922 – 1 November 1987)

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best, if he wins, knows the thrills of high achievement, and, if he fails, at least fails daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat." (John F. Kennedy (1961), remarks on Theodore Roosevelt)

Lévesque inspired enthusiasms and devotion .

René Lévesque was one of those of whom Kennedy spoke. His life was spent **"in the arena"**. He knew **"great enthusiasms and devotions"** and was not a timid soul, who knew

"neither victory nor defeat". In particular, Lévesque could project his enthusiasm and capture broad public support, like nobody else I have ever known, except perhaps for Trudeau.

It is difficult, therefore, for anyone, let alone a Liberal Quebec Anglophone, to comment on, the charming and revered father of the Parti Québécois. Lévesque was the undisputed leader and inspiration of the separatist movement in Quebec. There were separatist leaders before him – and have been separatist leaders since, but he was the only person with the credentials, charisma and will to make the separatist movement into a credible political party. It is said that Pierre Bourgault could create a wave of feeling for independence and was himself the wave. Lévesque, however, was the movement. He towered over every nationalist at the time and has ever since.

Defender of the French language.

Lévesque, like his family and schoolmates, was a bilingual Québécois from Gaspé. Ferociously appreciative and protective of the French language and French Canadian rights, he nevertheless, was also very fair-minded towards minorities in Québec, especially the English.

Distinguished career as a war correspondent

At age 21, he went overseas as a uniformed war correspondent in the American Army. When the invasion of Europe took place, he served in France and saw Dachau concentration camp when it was liberated. He returned to Canada in 1946 and joined the French service of the CBC. He was a war correspondent in Korea in 1951 and was "discovered" at last for his writing and reportorial skills. (Jean Provencher, 1975 at pp 76-80) Eventually he went freelance and left Radio Canada in 1956 to do his own weekly program "Point de Mire," the public-affairs program he hosted with such stunning success. In 1958-1959, he was the effective leader of the

CBC producers' strike, and earned another side to his public persona and his personal skills.

Point de Mire and the strike at Radio-Canada

The strike at Radio-Canada was settled in March 1959, but René Lévesque had played such a crucial part in it that the CBC retaliated by killing "Point de Mire." Thereafter, he shared air time with Gérard Pelletier and Judith Jasmin. But the public still swore only by him. (Claude Fournier, 1993 at p. 2)

Entry into politics

When asked **" Exactly when did you join the Liberals?' Lévesque replied: 'At the beginning of May, 1960, when I agreed to run in the election. Just a month and a half before the election itself. Before that I wasn't a member of any party.' "** (Hugh Bingham Myers, 1964 at p. 17)

Lévesque's ambiguity – the Hamlet of Quebec

"To be or not to be. That is the question", Hamlet, Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Throughout his career, Lévesque had doubts about himself and the projects in which he was involved. He was a sovereignist rather than a separatist, but was ambiguous to the end on the question. Parizeau, in comparison, never had any doubts and was a "pur et dur". Parizeau was the "ying" to Lévesque's "yang".

"Separatism if necessary, but not necessarily separatism" could have been Lévesque's motto. In his doubts and self doubts, in his rages and in his serene periods, in his action and inaction, Lévesque, in every way, was Quebec's most complete Hamlet.

Even as a minister in Jean Lesage's Liberal Government of 1960-1966, Lévesque was outspoken and ambiguous about the resort to violence. For example in 9 May 1964 he is reported to have said: **"Speaking of the violence which had the open support of young people, Lévesque declared that any political change must come about: 'as far as possible without guns or dynamite.' Another report quoted him as saying: 'Guns and dynamite must not be used until all else has failed.'"** (Le Devoir, 9 May 1964; Louis Fournier, 1964 at p. 58)

On 14 February 1969, after condemning the violence on behalf of the PQ, to the bombing of the Montreal Stock Exchange, René Lévesque said **"what is equally serious is the fact that it takes bombs and violence to really arouse our present leaders and get some action out of them. Terrorism must be rendered harmless as soon as possible, but terrorism is a living symptom of illness, not its cause."** (Louis Fournier, 1984 at p. 151)

In February 1971, at a national convention, Lévesque said: **"independence is irreversible. My only concern is how we're going to get there, by violence or by democratic action. I hope we will get there like civilized people, but we'll get there one way or another."** (Louis Fournier, 1984 at p. 281)

<u>After the 29 April 1970 election</u>

In October 1970, Lévesque was justifiably upset that his party had only seven seats in the National Assembly, although having received 23.1% of the vote in the election five months earlier. Nevertheless, he seemed to confuse 23.1% with a majority. He also ignored the fact that the Crédit Social and the Union Nationale had together received 30.8% of the popular vote and the Liberals 45.4%.

In August 1970, he publicly mused about leaving the leadership of the Parti Québécois. (Le Soleil, 18 August 1970). In 21 August 1970, he gave an interview to the Canadian Press, where he declared that: **"the citizens of Quebec were manipulated, and organized in an 'écoeurante' fashion that Trudeau's entourage crapulously falsified the figures, that an imbecile politician like Robarts is a small-time crook…"** (My translation; Le Soleil 24 August 1970)

The Canadian Press asked: **"Do you believe that the independence of Quebec can be achieved in a democratic way?"** Lévesque responded: **"It is possible that the answer will eventually be no, except that one must not accept that it can be done another way than by the democratic process."** (My translation; Le Soleil 24 August 1970)

Lévesque complained about the English minority of **"sons of bitches"** controlled by the establishment voting en bloc. (Le Soleil 24 August 1970) In reality, it was the English ridings that had been gerrymandered and had few seats for their 16% of the population. And it was the smaller French seats which traditionally supported the Union Nationale, Duplessis, the right wing and eventually the Parti Québécois.

Claude Lemelin in a bloc-note in Le Devoir stated: **"His verbal excesses: 'nose in shit', 'the fling flang of almost everybody', 'the filthy excretions of just about everyone else', 'the 200 sons of bitches', 'the small time crook who does not know it, whose name is Robarts', Mr. Lévesque would like us to interpret them as a 'radicalization' of the Parti Québécois concerning the place of Anglophones, this sixth of the electorate that no party can permit itself to reject *a priori*, as Louis Bernard, the leader of Mr. Camille Laurin's cabinet, pointed out in the latest edition of Nouveau Point de Mire."** (My translation)

Lemelin warned of radicalization: **"But, this 'radicalization' risks, without the knowledge of Mr. Lévesque, rapidly leading to sectarianism, a fanaticism that he, himself, has always disapproved of and fought against until now, in the face of the natural inclination of a fraction of militants in his party."** (My translation; Le Devoir, 26 August 1970) Lemelin continued: **"Before implying any longer that independence could come about by non-democratic means, 'except that we don't accept that it could come other than by a democratic process', the PQ party leader would do well to swallow his bitterness, to 'recharge his batteries' as the expression goes, to more subtly weigh the implication of this type of ambiguity."** (Claude Lemelin, Le Devoir, 26 August 1970; translated and republished in the Gazette, 29 August 1970)

Lévesque during the Crisis

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread" (Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

The October Crisis cannot be described without reference to Lévesque's role, because, although out of office, he had decided to take a major public part in the events as they evolved.

René Lévesque was no fool, but as a political leader, he often acted very emotionally. During the Crisis he should have remained silent or have tempered his fiery language in his almost daily articles in the Journal de Montreal and the Journal de Québec. He should have told the students, teachers and professors, most of whom were Péquistes, that their "debrayage" and social unrest was just what the FLQ wanted.

He should also have realized that he could not be as informed as Bourassa, Choquette and Trudeau, who were receiving constant briefings.

He should not have contradicted Laurin when this latter stood up in the National Assembly and supported the calling in of the Army by Quebec (Later on, Lévesque was to change his mind on this, without apology to Laurin).

He should not have been the leader, with Claude Ryan and taken part with 14 other "eminent personalities" in the ill-advised press conference and petition of 14 October 1970, which amongst other things, spoke of "political prisoners"; the language of the FLQ.

He should have taken outside advice, or at least, he was badly counselled during the Crisis, if he took counsel at all. It was only on Friday evening, 16 October, after a meeting of the Superior Council of the Parti Québécois in Montreal, that he and the PQ asked unequivocally that the FLQ release the two hostages.

He ignored the fact that threats and violence to extort the separation of Quebec from Canada was a Canadian matter as much as a Quebec matter and that Ontario had an equal interest in the Canadian Confederation. This was in fact confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Referendum Reference in 1998.

He should have realized that his personal views against the Government, expounded in his very expressive language, were exactly what the FLQ had hoped for.

From the beginning, Lévesque believed he could be the unelected leader of a political party and at the same time a journalist with a daily column. Thus Lévesque differed from Ryan, who was a journalist who, at the same time, aspired to have a political role.

Lévesque in retrospect on the Crisis

René Lévesque never understood that he acted unwisely in any way during the Crisis. In the chapter of memoirs, "Attendez que je me rappelle," he still fails to realize that he had acted

as a journalist and also a leader of a political party, that he had made statements which gave comfort to the FLQ, that he never called for the release of the Cross and Laporte until it was too late, that he had contradicted his Party Caucus in the National Assembly and that throughout he was not calm but used flamboyant ill-advised language. His chapter on the Crisis in his memoirs repeats his lack of calm and is the most florid of all the chapters in the book. This is reminiscent of the trial lawyers' dictum: "when you have neither the facts nor law on your side, hammer on the table."

Lévesque never understood that Quebec and Canada were, and are, part of a federal state and that he should have acted in matters of statecraft accordingly, until a change in the constitution.

Lévesque thought he was manipulated during the Crisis

On 8 November 1970 Lévesque said: **"The latest events have just proved it, we were successfully manipulated for a month like a flock of sheep, like a tribe that is distained, and by other Québécois such as Drapeau, Trudeau, Marchand, etc."** (My translation; La Presse, 9 November 1970)

Lévesque did not realize that he was a major cause, if not the major cause of the Parti Québécois having acted like a flock of sheep, because of his frequent, often contradictory statements and his indirect support of the FLQ. Gérard Pelletier, on the other hand, understood that the Parti Québécois was in greater danger from the FLQ, than were the Federal and Quebec governments. **"It could be said almost without irony that, instead of exerting pressure upon the governments, the FLQ might well have asked the Quebec separatists to pay the ransom for the return of the hostages. There is no doubt that, apart from the victims themselves, the**

terrorist activities did the most harm to the separatist cause *by making suspect a political option freely adopted by a significant portion of the population.*" (Original emphasis, Gérard Pelletier (English), 1971 at p.199)

Lévesque as seen by the FLQ

Nor did Lévesque realize that the FLQ strategy was to manipulate the Parti Québécois, whom the FLQ considered to be part of petite bourgeoisie. "Revolutionary Strategy and the Role of the Avant-Garde" written years before, but only published in 31 October 1970, showed the contempt of the FLQ for the Part Québécois, but it was a secret document and was not revealed even in "La Cognée". It read at one point: **"Of course, we mean something more than René Lévesque's paper independence which is supported by the parasitic Petit Bourgeois of Quebec who only want to replace the English interests with those of American imperialism. For us independence is inseparable from the realization of collective self-determination by the masses …"** (The Gazette, Revolutionary Strategy and the Role of the Avant-Garde, 31 October 1970)

Lévesque and his penchant for statements intended to shock

René Lévesque was an intuitive person who thought quickly and had no compunction about immediately expressing his thoughts often in vivid, florid language, which made him a very interesting persona to the public, the press, his contemporaries and his friends. There were occasional outbursts, as well, which did not always serve him well or the Parti Québécois during the Crisis. Herewith are some examples:

"Mr. Lévesque delivered a customary interminable address, but, this time, with an uncustomary enthusiasm, not hesitating to call the federal ministers (Trudeau, Marchand, etc. …) 'political scoundrels', who manipulated April's provincial election and who 'reap what they have sown'." (My translation; La Presse, 9 November 1970)

He added, in his occasional almost uncontrolled style: **"In a madhouse like this, as inevitably happens in such cases, the police take over power and dictate to the members of government, who have lost control … The wolves had been let loose. As always, the rabid sheep were even worse, and their wild bleating increased with the terrible unanimity of a collective nervous breakdown."**

Lévesque accused Trudeau of **"fascist manipulation of the Quebec population during the Cross-Laporte affair"** (ibid.) and twice again, in the article, accused Trudeau of **"facism".**

He continued: **"The police and the army will have to leave some day and Trudeau's filthy tricks, in any event, will not prevent all sorts of other kidnappings."** (ibid.)

Trudeau had the last laugh, however, in his Memoirs, **when he said: "It should be noted that in the quarter-century that has followed the October Crisis, the country has seen no resurgence of terrorism. 'One day, the police and the army will be gone', René Lévesque predicted in La Presse, 'and Trudeau's stupidity will not have prevented more kidnappings' The facts have proven otherwise."** (Memoirs, 1993 at p.149.)

Conclusion – Lévesque and the Crisis

René Lévesque was the unassailable, beloved leader and modern founder of the independence movement, a flamboyant, outspoken person who could be elated or depressed.

Lévesque, in the heat of the moment, often acted intuitively without pause, but not necessarily wisely. The October Crisis was not his finest hour.

Lévesque the person – the beloved prodigal son

René Lévesque had a whole gamut of qualities and defects and this made him so appealing. If Jean Chretien has been described as looking **"like the guy who drove the getaway car"**, Lévesque was too complicated and changing in mood and even appearance to be encapsulated in a single phrase. He might, however, be described at times as looking like a lovable, apologetic, but not really repentant, guest who has arrived very late for a dinner party, whom everyone, nevertheless welcomes joyously, although they know he will do it again next time. In other words, Lévesque can perhaps be best encapsulated as **"the beloved prodigal son"**.

In 1967, I organized a conference of the Quebec Liberal Party and had all the big guns of the Party as speakers at various panel discussions – Jean Lesage, Paul Gérin-Lajoie, Eric Kierans, Pierre Laporte, Robert Bourassa and René Lévesque. I realized how popular Lévesque was when he arrived 1 ½ hours late and yet many persons waited patiently for him and did not leave the room, where he was to speak. When he finally arrived, he was applauded lustily, and the audiences belonging to other speakers in other rooms, deserted and went to hear René.

Lévesque and I were both in the Opposition from 1968 to 1970 and after the session ended every Friday, we took the train from Quebec to Montreal. My wife Rosslyn would meet the train at Park Avenue Station and drive René to his home in Outremont, before we drove to our home in Town of Mount Royal. One evening, as he got out of the car, he said philosophically, "We will see what happens." He was referring to the first general meeting that evening of "Le mouvement souvereigneté-association", the precursor of the Parti Québécois.

No one knew how many persons would show up and I decided to attend as an observer in the gallery. When I arrived, Marc Brière, Lévesque's loyal first lieutenant, was pacing up and down the sidewalk waiting for Lévesque, who was his usual 1 ½ hours late. When, he did arrive he was cheered joyously by the large crowd, who forgave him on the spot. The new party was going to be squeaky clean and had announced that all members of the Executive would make a public declaration of their assets and liabilities. An enthusiastic member asked Lévesque during the question period what his net worth was, but the official answer came back, that this would take place when the Party took power. I suspect that, in any event, René's net worth was far less than most politicians.

Even as Prime Minister, Lévesque never changed his habits and it was accepted that he was above the rules, that others were expected to follow. At one point, his Minister of Health, announced that Quebecers should cut down, if not stop, smoking and the Minister of Tourism asked Quebecers to holiday in Quebec. The following week when the National Assembly adjourned, Lévesque was photographed happily chain-smoking on his favourite beach in the State of Maine, as he always had, and would, in the future.

Once after a party, Lévesque, although Prime Minister was driving home alone late at night when he struck and killed a man, whose practice was, to lie in the middle of the road and kick his legs to attract attention and charity. Another driver had already stopped, and when Lévesque arrived he had the misfortune to swerve and run over the man on the road. The Coroner issued a more than 100 page report which exonerated Lévesque, but failed to mention that he had not been given a blood test. The report did note, however, that the deceased must have been quite drunk, having had considerably alcohol in his veins. Jean Chrétien later

observed: “Ah Quebec! The only place in the world where they give the deceased the blood test.”

IX **Claude Ryan** (26 January 1925 – 9 February 2004)

Claude Ryan – early years

The second of three children, Claude Ryan and his two brothers were brought up in one of Montreal’s poorest districts single-handedly, by his devoted, pious, courageous mother, who always acted with dignity. All three boys had very successful careers. Gérald became a judge of the Quebec Court of Appeals and Yves was Mayor of Montreal North. Claude was reading at the age of four and was accelerated through grade school. When he and his elder brother Gérald took qualifying Latin exams, the « Oeuvres des petits prêtres » sponsored both brothers to attend the Collège Sainte-Croix where they received a classical education. Claude finished first in his class for each of seven years. Upon graduation, he decided against joining the priesthood, despite the college’s expectations. Nevertheless, he never strayed far from the Church. In 1945, he became the secretary of l’Action catholique canadienne (ACC) and he remained an integral part of the organisation until the 1960s. During his association with the ACC, Ryan was involved with many other projects: he was the administrator of the Caisse Populaire St-Louis-de-France, a member of the administrative council of the Offices des techniques de diffusion, and presided over the development of the Institut canadien d’éducation des adultes. In 1958, Ryan met and married Madeleine Guy, a farmer’s daughter who was also involved with the ACC. In 1962, Gérard Filion, then publisher of Le Devoir, offered Ryan a job as an editorial writer. Ryan accepted and, when

Filion left a year later, Ryan was elected as publisher of the newspaper. Under his tutelage, Le Devoir was noted for his demanding, probing editorials.

Ryan journalist and politician

Ryan, during the Crisis, was a journalist who aspired to be a politician. In this, he was different from Lévesque who was a politician, who believed he could be a journalist at the same time.

Ryan and the authority of Quebec during the Crisis

Ryan believed, above all, that the Crisis was a Quebec matter and ignored the Federal nature of Canada and the role of the Municipal, Quebec, and Federal Governments. Ryan did not believe, however, that the Federal government used the Crisis as a means to crush the independence movement. (Manon Leroux, 2002, at p. 72; Le Devoir, 29 September 1975)

Ryan on negotiating with terrorists

After Choquette's rejection of FLQ demands, the Montreal Star reported Ryan as having written: **"History is filled with cases in which governments had to compromise on principles … it wasn't all or nothing…between freeing no political prisoners and all the prisoners, … there was a margin for bargaining - intelligent and practical bargaining."** (Montreal Star, 12 October 1970) Unfortunately Ryan never gave any examples from history where democratic governments had successfully exchanged terrorists for hostages.

Ryan and parallel government

Ryan's explanations of his role in the discussions which took place over a possible coalition government were not very illuminating, nor convincing. His hubris and his ambition seemed to have got the better of him on this occasion. As in the case of Lévesque, the October Crisis was not Ryan's finest hour, in a long and very successful career.

Ryan the person

When Ryan ran for the leadership of the Quebec Liberal Party in 1977, however, I had no compunction in supporting him, rather than Raymond Garneau. I hoped for a major philosophic change in the Liberal Party. In retrospect now, I wish I had supported Garneau. Ryan proved that he just could not get along with the Federal Liberals under Trudeau and with many other persons, including some in his own party. This led to constant unnecessary disputes and to his surprise defeat at the hands of René Lévesque in the election of 1981, after Lévesque had lost the Referendum 60% to 40% the year before. Nevertheless, when Bourassa was Prime Minister in 1985, Ryan was a very loyal and effective minister.

Ryan, unfortunately, never seemed to change his mind on anything he had decided on publicly. In November 2003, I met him poking happily around in the McGill University bookstore. We talked and he was his usual informed, lively, charming self. At one point, however, he said, without bitterness, but quite pointedly, that he had heard of things written by me about him, to his detriment. We agreed to meet for lunch, on 25 November, but he telephoned that he had trouble eating and we met instead on the ground floor of the McGill Law Faculty library to talk, because he also had difficulty in walking upstairs. He still had a twinkle and the old fire in his eye, and referred to one of my periodic newspaper articles on the Crisis, where I had explained that our concessions to the FLQ did not include exchanging terrorists, as opposed to his position. He argued

that his writings and the petition of the sixteen eminent personalities had only recommended negotiations, not necessarily exchanging prisoners. He was not physically well and our talk, although pleasant, was very short. I said I would send him the petition of 14 October 1970 and other documents, but soon thereafter, it was announced in the papers that he had stomach cancer. I did not press the matter further and he died two months later on 26 January 2004. Even with an untenable position, Ryan was sure of himself to the end. The petition (See Appendix H) read " … we wish to give our most urgent support to negotiating an exchange of the two hostages for the political prisoners.''

Despite, or perhaps because of, his intransigence, Ryan was a giant in every way and an intriguing personality. Even after a difficult discussion with Ryan, one wanted to meet him once more for another session. He was a sort of intellectual stimulant and never bland company. Ryan was always an important figure in Quebec and Canadian life, as well as an endearing personality. Will there ever again be anyone in Quebec or Canada of his eminence, a word which seems to fit him perfectly?

X **Jean-Jacques Bertrand** (20 June 1916 – 22 February 1973)

Jean-Jacques Bertrand was the sympathetic and under-rated leader of the Union Nationale, which had won 17 seats in the Quebec National Assembly, in the 29 April 1970 election although having received only 19.6 % of the vote. (The PQ's had earned 23.1 % of the vote, but only seven seats). Bertrand as leader of the opposition party with most seats was therefore Leader of the Official Opposition, but acted with judicious restraint in his statements during the Crisis. He spoke

calmly in and outside the House, probably realizing, as a former Premier, that during a crisis there is a time and place for public criticism. He agreed on Quebec calling in of the Army and, on 15 November 1970, he declared that had he been Premier during the Crisis, he would have acted as had Robert Bourassa and his Government. He added:

"Choquette was in the grips of an extraordinarily serious dilemma and I would not criticize him... Although at one point, I believed that the Bourassa Government was tagging along behind by the Federal Government, Bourassa's and Choquette's explanations given in the House dissipated that impression." (L'Action, 16 November 1970, p. 1) Bertrand, however, was critical of declarations of Jean Drapeau and Jean Marchand.

XI **Camille Samson** (born 3 January 1935)

Camille Samson was leader of the Crédit Sociale, which had received only 10% of the popular vote, but had 12 seats in the National Assembly. Although he was just as flamboyant and garrulous as Lévesque, he nevertheless remained relatively silent on the Crisis, despite his regular radio program and his constant flow of articles in the newspapers.

The position taken by the Crédit Sociale was quite different from the Parti Québécois. The Crédit Sociale did not try to take political advantage of the Crisis. It even put an end to its congress of 500 delegates prematurely in Thetford Mines on Sunday, 18 October 1970 upon hearing of the brutal murder of Pierre Laporte, even though the Congress had been planned long in advance. (La Presse, 19 October 1970)

Camille Samson and his party were critical of the social measures of the Liberals, but rallied unequivocally around the government over the question of terrorists.

XII **Robert Lemieux** (born 1941)

Robert Lemieux was a Montrealer by birth from a well-established family, with distinguished French and English ancestors. He grew up in Notre-Dame-de-Grace, graduated from McGill Law Faculty in 1965 and in 1966 joined the prestigious Montreal anglophone law firm of O'Brien, Home, Hall, Nolan, Saunders, O'Brien, & Smythe, which he left in 1968. He was a very active member of the Rassemblement de l'indépendence Nationale (RIN) and defended many FLQ members in court.

Lemieux's divided role during the Crisis

Did Robert Lemieux act well and wisely during the Crisis? He was the lawyer for the FLQ and, in my view, he acted very badly on behalf of his clients and ultimately for society. Lemieux never understood that to have credibility with the public and the Government of Quebec, with whom he was negotiating, he could not make public statements during negotiations and could not use the outrageous language which he did. He never understood that his positive part in the Crisis was in conflict with his role as a negotiator for the FLQ.

His opposite number was Robert Demers named by Bourassa to negotiate, who remained silent during the Crisis, so that he did not compromise the negotiations. Lemieux would negotiate with Demers and then hold press conferences favouring the FLQ kidnappers. Thereafter he would

lead student strikes and rallies at the Université de Montréal and the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM).

The death of Laporte

Robert Lemieux never called on his clients, the FLQ, to release Cross and Laporte. When negotiations were broken off and he had finished his press conference at 11:15 p.m. on 15 October 1970, reporter Gérard Cellier reported: **"The question hung in the air: 'Now will they kill them?'"** (Montréal Matin, 16 October 1970)

Lemieux had said the same thing about Cross the week before on 6 October 1970 **"I have no doubt that Cross will be executed if…"** (Montréal Matin, 7 October 1970)

Lemieux's answer could only stimulate the FLQ to kill their hostages. It was not likely to convince them not to do otherwise.

In October 2000, during an hour long TV program "Maisonneuve à l'écoute", Marc Lalonde, Claude Ryan, myself and Lemieux were interviewed. Lemieux, again, declared that Laporte's death was caused by the refusal to exchange prisoners. It never occurred to him that he could have acted in October 1970 to prevent that murder.

XIII **Michel Chartrand** (born 20 December 1916)

Labour union leader, Michel Chartrand, like Robert Lemieux, played a major role in rousing students, dropouts, youths, FLQ members and sympathizers. During the crucial period from Cross's kidnapping on 5 October to the imposition of the War Measures Act Regulation in

the early morning of 16 October 1970, Chartrand and Lemieux, along with Vallières and Gagnon, were the orators who were able to rouse the students and young PQ members. They did what the FLQ could not do.

Chartrand, Lemieux, Vallières and Gagnon were jailed under the War Measures Act Regulation and were subsequently convicted.

XIV Pierre Vallières and Charles Gagnon

"The revolution is the dictatorship of the exploited against the exploiters." Fidel Castro (born 1927)

From 1964 on, Pierre Vallières and Charles Gagnon were essential in giving the FLQ new meaning and support from the public and from the labour movement, which they had radicalized by increased bombings, demonstrations, and violence. During the crucial eleven days from 5 October to 16 October 1970, Vallières and Gagnon also caused students, young Parti Québécois members and others to support the FLQ. The role of Vallières and Gagnon was essential to the October Crisis and to its denouement. That role has been greatly underestimated.

Vallières, the early years (22 February 1938 – 22 December 1998)

The eldest of three boys, Vallières' childhood was marred by his family's poverty. In the colourful account of his life, "Nègres blanc d'Amérique", he describes the conditions in which he lived, first in the East-End of Montreal, then in Ville-Jacques-Cartier. Despite his family's situation, Vallières was a precocious child who learned to read and write two years before he

entered school. (Pierre Vallières, 1971 at p. 91) While his mother hoped her son would study at the new college in Longueuil, Vallières rebelled, preferring to stay with his **"own kind"** in a neighbourhood school. (Pierre Vallières, 1971 at p. 108) Two years later, Vallières entered a classical college where he excelled, coming first in his class. At seventeen, Vallières worked a year at a bank. But soon tiring of the tedium, he returned to college and in 1956 passed the examinations and graduated. That same year, Vallières made the acquaintance of Québécois poet Gaston Miron, a man who introduced Vallières to many of the thinkers and beatniks of the day. (Pierre Vallières, 1971at p. 149) Vallières began writing, and his work was published in Le Devoir. From 1959-61, Vallières again returned to school, studying philosophy at the theological college of the Franciscans in Quebec.

Not content with his prospects, Vallières went to France. In addition to experiencing the life of an agricultural worker, he discovered Marxism. Sojourning in Paris, he quickly became disillusioned with the French version of communism. After a bout of depression, Vallières decided to return to Quebec in 1962, where Pelletier offered him a writing job at La Presse and suggested that he also return to "Cité Libre". Vallières decided to do both. In no time, Vallières was the editor of "Cité Libre" and, just as quickly, in 1964, he resigned or was dismissed. Undeterred, he founded "Révolution québecoise" with Charles Gagnon. The creation of this journal coincided with the strike at "La Presse", the death of the nationalist Gilles Legault in a Montreal jail, as well as Vallières' and Gagnon's clandestine enlistment into the FLQ. (See in general, Gustave Morf, 1970 at pp. 98-118.)

Charles Gagnon, the early years (born 21 March 1939)

Born on 21 March 1939 in Sainte-Cécile-du-Bic, near Rimouski, Charles Gagnon was

one of fourteen children. His father farmed during the summer "une terre de roches" and worked as a lumberjack during the winter. (Louis Fournier, 1998 at p. 112) The young Charles studied at the Seminary of Rimouski and then went on to the Université de Montréal, where he failed to complete his studies in French Literature and Sociology. Nevertheless, he managed to teach at the university as a lecturer.

Despite his studies, Gagnon's interest was not in school but in left-wing Quebec politics. By the time he was forty, he had both founded or contributed to a plethora of left-wing journals, including Cité Libre, Révolution québecoise, En Lutte and La Cognée. His Marxist-Leninist beliefs also led to his involvement in numerous socialist and separatist groups. (See in general, Gustave Morf, 1970 at pp. 94-97)

Vallières and Gagnon and the Crisis

Vallières and Gagnon were two dedicated and unrepentant theoretical Marxists. Even as Stalin's atrocities were being exposed, they believed that the end justified the means. They infiltrated every organization and movement they could, redirecting them towards a more radical stance. Gifted thinkers, orators, writers and energetic activists, they organized students into holding mass meetings, and caused the closing of many CEGEPS and most of the Université de Montréal and Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM).

Marxist trappings but anarchist principles

"There's no question of your obtaining socialist independence gradually in Quebec. So it must of course be through violence. I do not say this lightheartedly, it is the same everywhere." Jean-Paul Sartre. *(Extract from an interview recorded on video-tape and shown at a teach-in*

organized by le Comité québécois pour la defense des libertés civiles in Montreal on 16 January 1971) (Gérard Pelletier, The October Crisis, at p. 132)

Vallières and Gagnon were self-proclaimed Marxists, but did not work within the Communist Party and had no real Marxist ideology. They were really anarchists and not part of a workers' revolt. In fact, Gagnon and Vallières, were not workers at all, but relatively comfortable members of the intellectual elite, much like Marx, Engels and Lenin.

Nor were Vallières and Gagnon genuine communists, hoping that the great revolution of the Quebec proletariat would arise out of classic, Marxist historical conditions. Rather, they realized subconsciously or consciously that the workers of Quebec were not exploited enough to revolt.

Thus Vallières and Gagnon hoped for a shortcut. As Marc Laurendeau put it. **"By means of the systematic use of manufactured propaganda...they hoped for a spontaneous revolution (psychologically determined) rather than an historical revolution, conditioned by the meeting of matured economic and social factors."** (My translation; Marc Laurendeau, 1974 at p.49)

Just as startling, distinctive and non-Marxist was their linking themselves with the bourgeois, intellectual Quebec separatist movement as exemplified by the Parti Québécois, rather than the Communist Party of Canada.

Vallières' criticism of the FLQ organization

From the beginning, Vallières was very critical of the FLQ and their lack of an over-riding Marxist central organization. Thus he wrote in La Cognée were: **"The infantile**

disease of the Quebec revolutionaries can be summed up in this way: each fellow who even remotely proved himself during a demonstration, by a blow or a small act of sabotage, believed himself to have a mission of establishing his own movement which, of course, would claim the support of the FLQ or of the ALQ, unless it was not that of the FLN or ARQ. Not only does each one establish his own little network, but inside the interior of the network, it often happens that each one believes himself to be well-inspired to develop his own contacts and to also have for himself his own court of counsellors, couriers and naïve admirers." (My translation; Vallières, La Cognée, 1 October 1965; R. Comeau, D. Cooper, P.Vallières, 1990 at p. 41)

FLQ criticism of Vallières and Gagnon and their Marxism

Nor were Vallières and Gagnon necessarily received happily by all FLQ members as can be seen from a 1966 article in La Cognée:

> **No, the FLQ is not communist. Contrary to the image that Vallières and Gagnon have been able to give it temporarily, through their writings and their statements […]**
>
> **We are even in a position to affirm that communists are practically non-existent among us and that not one can be found among our leaders.**
>
> **[…] It is necessary to emphasize that between us and the Vallières-Gagnon group, there has not even been the ghost of cooperation. We do not disassociate ourselves from them, we only contend that we do not work together and that we support different points of view, particularly in the domains of organization and leadership, precisely the sectors which revealed their weakness.**

For, it is very necessary to say it, if it has not already been deduced: the "neo-F.L.Q." of Vallières-Gagnon acted independently, from the start, from the other cells or sectors, existing or in training. Thus, there was no cooperation between us whom they called "opportunists" and them, who found La Cognée and the FLQ sufficiently profitable as symbols to help themselves to them, while using the first with an utterly absurd series of editions and the second, as if they themselves created it. (On this account, where do the real opportunists lie?) (My translation; Emphasis added; La Cognée, No. 62, October 1966)

Antipathy between Vallières and Gagnon and the original FLQ members could have arisen as well from the fact that the former were apparently gay, at a time when being gay was not politically correct.

Vallières, an unrealistic dreamer

Vallières was unrealistic, even naïve, in his views as to the likelihood of revolution taking place. He failed to understand the lack of support for his concept of revolution in such relatively democratic societies as Quebec and Canada. He expected workers and even farmers (all landowners) to rise up:

"In Quebec, guerilla warfare must be urban and rural at the same time. It will in fact be mainly urban, developing in some 260 urban municipalities (more than 2500 inhabitants), consisting of 75% of the population. But, it cannot neglect the approximately 1400 other so-called rural municipalities, where 25% of the population lives, including all

the agricultural class." (My translation, P. Vallières, L'Avant-garde, no 4, juin 1966 reproduced in R. Comeau, D. Cooper, P. Vallières, 1990, at p. 135)

Pierre Vallières believed erroneously that the FLQ was a spontaneous leftist revolutionary movement, but which had to be carefully, if not scientifically nurtured:

"…the FLQ was not only an armed resistance movement, born from the spontaneous anger of the young people shocked by the exploitation and the submission of their people. It was first and above all a project of alternative leftist society. …" (My translation; P. Vallières, Preface in R. Comeau, D. Cooper, P. Vallières, 1990 at p. 9)

Gustave Morf, the psychiatrist, who understood Vallières, perhaps better than Vallières understood himself said: **"One cannot doubt the sincerity of Pierre Vallières. His ideas must be taken very seriously. That is why we have given them so much space here. Many young people think as he does, many believe that it is sufficient to destroy a system to have the guarantee of a better one."** (Gustave Morf, 1970 at p. 116)

Morf then cites Joseph Conrad who criticized **"the imbecile and atrocious concept of a purely Utopian revolution encompassing destruction by the first means to hand, in the strange conviction that a fundamental change of heart must follow the downfall of any given human institution. These people are unable to see that all they can affect is merely a change of names."** (Gustave Morf, 1970 at p. 116)

<u>Vallières fooled everyone including the public</u>

Although a member of the FLQ and the person who with Gagnon intensified its activities and violence, Vallières **"brazenly maintained his innocence. Such was the effect of his propaganda that the great majority of the French-Canadian public actually came to believe**

that he was persecuted solely for his political beliefs, not for any leading role in the actions of the neo-FLQ." (Gustave Morf, 1970 at p. 109)

Gagnon the dreamer

Gagnon, like Vallières, was a dedicated and sincere reformer, but a dreamer in a hurry. He did not understand how leaders react in a Marxist society once in power, or how the so-called worker/leaders had acted in Russia after the revolution. Thus, he sincerely and enthusiastically described the workers' society that the FLQ would impose on Quebec once in power as follows:

> **Rather than define, let us describe what could become of Quebec in the process of transforming itself into a new society. The first manifestations of this transformation would be found in everyday life. The workers would manage "their" factory: hours of work, allocation of tasks, salaries, vacations, internal organization … with the assistance of advisors, they would bring themselves up-to-date on local and national domestic markets, new techniques, regional and national economic orientation, external outlets; they would also keep watch on the development and application of health and safety regulations judged to be necessary and would ensure maximum productivity (yield in manufactured or processed products taking into account production costs), all the while making sure that their working conditions were the most humane possible.** (My translation; Emphasis added; L'Avant-garde, No 4, juin 1966; reproduced in R. Comeau, D. Cooper, P. Vallières, 1990, at p. 101)

Gagnon also had closed his eyes to what had happened to farms, farmers and production under communism and collectivisation in Russia and the Ukraine. He does not seem to have read contemporary Marxist authors or have even read such popular writers as George Orwell or to have understood the "New Class" of Milovan Djilas. Thus, Gagnon wrote in 1966 of farming under the new regime:

" <u>the life of a farmer would become very rapidly similar, if not completely identical, to that of the factory and other blue- collar workers (mines, construction, etc.)</u> To be modern and prosperous, agriculture must be industrialized to the maximum, in the same way as the rest of the economy." (My translation; Emphasis added; Gagnon, *L'Avant-garde*, No. 4, June 1966, reproduced in R. Comeau, D. Cooper and P. Vallières, 1990 at p. 102)

Gagnon, a farm boy and farmer's son, expected farmers to revolt in order to give up their land and its operation to some central body who would control their lives and independence.

<u>Vallières and Gagnon and the labour movement</u>

Like all Marxists, Vallières and Gagnon distrusted and opposed the labour union movement. As Nicholas Regush said: **"The article in Cité Libre was a strong attack on big business and big unionism. He [Vallières] wrote that the unions represented `another tool of oppression in the hands of the ruling class. He warned that if the unions wanted to be effective they would have to break away from being capitalistic-like structures and would have to find the real support of the working class.'"** (Nicholas M. Regush, 1973 at p. 83)

<u>Vallières and Gagnon – their transformation after the Crisis</u>

On 13 December 1971 Vallières denounced terrorism and Marxism in favour of activity in the Parti Québécois in a long article published in Le Devoir. René Lévesque said it was an act of great courage. Charles Gagnon immediately denounced Vallières' conversion. (Le Devoir, 14 December 1971, Manon Leroux, 2002 at p.32)

In 1977, Charles Gagnon renounced Quebec separatism as bourgeois and reactionary nationalism and called for a Canadian workers' revolution across Canada. As Vallières and Gagnon have adopted so many contradictory positions inside and outside court, one is compelled to take their pronouncements with a grain of salt. They remind me of the old Texan expression: **"You have to believe this boy – he told you lies and he has acknowledged them, so you had better believe him now."**

How genuine was their conversion? Regush had this commentary: **"Although Vallières often stressed that his change of strategy was not opportunistic, I questioned this, not because he was lying, but because I didn't believe anyone could draw a clear line between personal interests and social interests."** (Nicholas M. Regush, 1973 at p. 162).

My own view, however, is that one must be very sceptical about the pronouncements of Gagnon and Vallières, who were without any political or moral code other than the end justifying the means. The writings of Vallières, especially, are brilliant and always provocative, but facile and filled with intended misconceptions, half-truths and misleading asides, which he would willingly discard, when the occasion required. His text, "The Assassination of Pierre Laporte" is the ultimate example of his oeuvre – a thesis, which does not hold a teacup of water and has been universally discredited by the Duchaîne Report, by the FLQ itself and by anyone who has read it.

Stephen Leacock said that *"A half-truth, like a half a brick, is more forceful than a whole truth, it flies further."* Vallières, was an eloquent, undaunted world-class purveyor of half-truths, one piled on the top of the other. On the international scene, George W. Bush comes to mind, but Vallières was informed, well-read and articulate. Bush, for his part, unlike Vallières, never changed his views with the passage of time.

Conclusion - Vallières and Gagnon

One of the revelations that my study of the Crisis has brought to me has been the recognition of the central role of Pierre Vallières and Charles Gagnon in the direction and magnitude of the Crisis. The FLQ began in 1963 with protests and occasional bombs. In 1964, Vallières and Gagnon radicalized the movement, directing it towards Marxism as well as intensified, labour unrest, demonstrations, violence and giant bombings.

Vallières and Gagnon proposed no real alternative to Quebec society and were anarchists, perhaps without realizing it themselves. They believed that a new society would spring from the ashes, but they could not define that society. The end was inevitable. When met by force exerted by democratically elected governments, their revolution collapsed.

XV. Jean-Paul Desbiens (born 7 March 1927)

"The failure of our system of teaching is the reflection of a failure, or at any rate a paralysis, of thought itself." (Les Insolences du Frère Untel, 1962, English, at p. 49).

Originally from Lac-Saint-Jean, Jean-Paul Desbiens joined the Mariste Brotherhood in

1941 and entered his novitiate in St-Hyacinthe. Five years later, he contracted tuberculosis and spent four years in a sanatorium. Despite this early setback, he returned to his studies in 1955, earning a licence in Philosophy from the Université de Laval. After spending some time teaching, Desbiens studied in Italy and Switzerland, and received a Ph.D. in Philosophy.

Desbiens, who believed in the primacy of education, was deeply involved in the educational system of Quebec. From 1964 to 1970, he was the director of college programmes, from 1972 to 1983 he was the director of the Notre-Dame-de-Foy campus at Cap Rouge, from 1984 to 1986 he was in charge of research and development at the Cégep de Sainte-Foy, and after 1986 was again the director of the Notre-Dame-de-Foy campus.

In addition to his involvement in education in Quebec, Desbiens has taken part in innumerable conferences and has published hundreds of articles and many books. For two years (1970-1972), Desbiens was the editor-in-chief of *La Presse*. To many, his most memorable work will always be *Les insolences du Frère Untel;* which has sold over 200,000 copies since it was first published in 1960. This sharp criticism of Quebecker's use of *joual* and the poor state of education in the province has been hailed as a catalyst for the Quiet Revolution, a revolution which, ironically, Desbiens derided. Nevertheless, Desbiens has always stood for a proud, educated, Quebec.

Desbiens incidentally made it clear in the first sentence of Chapter One of "Les Insolences" that it was André Laurendeau who in 21 October 1959 in Le Devoir first used the term "parler joual". Desbiens wrote Laurendeau a personal letter on 23 October 1959 and Laurendeau decided to publish it under the pseudonym, "Frère Untel", chosen by Laurendeau. Desbiens acknowledged his debt to Laurendeau and we all owe an enormous debt to Laurendeau and Desbiens.

From the start, Desbiens understood the FLQ and the October Crisis. His editorial in La Presse on 6 October 1970 the day after the kidnapping of Cross is a classic. It was prescient, predicted exactly what would happen, took the right position from the start and is written in spare, yet elegant language. Has anything better been written on the Crisis? (See Appendix, "E").

What was the role of Desbiens in the Crisis? He was the French-Canadian intellectual of considerable esteem and reputation in his own right, who was the first person in Quebec or Canada to speak out against the blackmail of the FLQ and the exchange of terrorists for hostages. As Editorial Page Editor of La Presse, he wrote the day after Cross's kidnapping, that the FLQ would not put their own lives in danger and when captured, would use the justice system to their advantage. They would eventually be released and would work for the government or pursue their studies in France.

Desbiens represented the French-Canadian intellectual, who did not join the Parti/Québecois/FLQ apologist bandwagon. In this way he represented the vast majority of Quebecers. Desbiens, however, particularly noted that he did not consider himself to be an intellectual. (See Appendix "E" infra and Jean-Paul Desbiens, 1986 at p. 282.)

Desbiens as compared with Charles Gagnon

"Two roads diverged in a wood and I, I took the path less travelled by …" Robert Frost (1875-1963)

A comparison is very revealing of the similarities in the backgrounds of Charles Gagnon and Jean-Paul Desbiens, both coming from poor rural Quebec and both acquiring fine educations "malgré les obstacles." How and why they took different paths is a story that should be told in

detail. That story would explain, perhaps better than anything else, why the October Crisis occurred and why it ended.

XVI. Jacques Parizeau (born 8 August 1930)

Jacques Parizeau, the erudite, very informed and eloquent economist/professor could at times seem imperious, but on a one-on-one basis, he could also be very charming. He had a fine reputation in the public and private sector as an economist and although not a major participant during the Crisis, was at times involved and contributed to it in at least six ways:

Firstly, when the specialist doctors' struck from 7 October to 16 October 1970, Parizeau did not equivocate, but opposed the official position of the Parti Québécois.

"The role of the Opposition in a crisis such as the one we are experiencing, and particularly, we of the Parti Québécois more than anyone else, should have been to give the Government all possible support to prevent its collapsing before the doctors' lobby. But instead the PQ was the first to open the way to a Government retreat." (La Presse, 8 October 1970; Gérard Pelletier, (English), 1971 at p. 44). Parizeau made his declaration, despite the earlier PQ National Council decision of 3-4 October 1970 in favour of the specialists and despite a violent argument between Lévesque and Parizeau on the subject. (Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at pp. 545-546.)

Fortunately Parizeau's view on the specialist doctors' strike prevailed and the PQ backed the Bourassa Government in the National Assembly. In consequence the Government could adopt all three Medicare Bills by midnight of 15-16 October and was able to apply the War Measures Act four hours later and just in time.

Secondly and unfortunately, Parizeau did not take the same position over the kidnappings, but was one of the sixteen eminent personalities who signed the Petition of 14 October 1970 and attended the press conference of the same date.

Thirdly in 1999, in retrospect, Parizeau had the courage and integrity to admit, without specifics, that the Parti Québécois acted very badly during the Crisis, and said: **"Those who lived through the events of October with great excitement, nevertheless hated to see their party so completely caught off guard. After the difficult experience of the October Crisis 1970, Jacques Parizeau promised himself that in the future he would intervene so that the sovereignist movement would never again fall into such an abyss."** (My translation; Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at p. 609).

Parizeau, himself summed up the Parti Québécois position during the Crisis:

"During the events of October, we behaved ourselves like amateurs. We must never again let ourselves be caught in such a way." (My translation; Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at p. 609).

Robert Demers, at the Colloque on Robert Bourassa at UQAM on 22 March 2002, advised me that the weekend before at a cocktail party, Jacques Parizeau had told him that it would have been disastrous for the government to have given in to the FLQ. It took a person of the stature of Jacques Parizeau to make this admission, if only privately.

Fourthly Parizeau sheds light on a possible coalition government. "'**I think that is what entered the minds of a certain number of persons: if the government collapses, we will take up the slack.' [Si le gouvernement s'éffondre, on prendra la suite.] 'But I was not party to those discussions' affirms Jacques Parizeau. 'I spent a weekend in putting them in contact one with another.' "** (Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at p. 565.) That Parizeau is talking of a weekend is interesting, because that would be the weekend that Ryan visited Saulnier.

Fifthly Parizeau explains the petition of 14 October 1970. He was merely the **"switchboard operator" ("standardiste")** at Parti Québécois headquarters when there was a very heavy telephone traffic, for a day or two. (Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at p. 566)

Parizeau indirectly is important for a sixth reason. His testimomy adds credibility to the Carole de Vault story. Parizeau said because of his relationship with de Vault during the Crisis it was: **"The most dangerous period of my life."** (My translation; Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at p. 546). Parizeau's biographer Pierre Duchesne wrote an illuminating chapter on Parizeau and the Crisis, which is well worth reading, as is the whole excellent biography of this remarkable personage. (Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at pp.535 -599).

XVII. "The Intellectuals"

Intellectuals are an accepted category of citizen in "latin" countries, but anyone taking the title in an Anglo-Saxon country is usually laughed at as being vain and presumptuous. Perhaps the most reasoned and critical study of intellectuals is by Paul Johnson (Intellectuals, 1988.) He starts with Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1718) and ends up with Cyril Connolly (1903-74).

Guy Rocher (born 1924), Fernand Dumont (1922-1997), Paul Bélanger and Marcel Rioux (1919-1992), distinguished professors who signed the petition of Wednesday, 14 April 1970 are examples of Quebec "intellectuals". Robert Bourassa, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and Gérard Pelletier were what I call "activist intellectuals" as were Jacques Parizeau, Lucien Bouchard and Bernard Landry. Without any disparagement, I would classify René Lévesque, and Jean Marchand as "activists".

Such classifications are of course subjective generalities, but the self-proclaimed "eminent personalities" during the Crisis decided to intervene, on Wednesday, 14 October 1970 after an undisclosed number of telephone calls, amongst themselves. This they did, although unelected and, having no more knowledge of the facts than the rest of the public and less than the government.

The role of an intellectual is to carefully and thoughtfully question authority, society and accepted truths, after long and profound thought, but not impetuously at the height of a political crisis by a public petition. The petition of 14 October 1970 partially took the side of the terrorists and especially against the Federal Government in a Federal state. The petition also called on the Quebec to release convicted terrorists for Cross and Laporte. Afterwards the 16 dropped that position, referring almost exclusively to the War Measures Act, which they still denigrate without facts at hand. Intellectuals in Quebec were an important factor during Crisis. What would have been the outcome, if they had used their influence and had called on the FLQ to release Cross and Laporte. Would Laporte be alive today?

The prestige of the intellectuals and their petition only encouraged the FLQ and gave them public support which was very, very unfortunate.

XVIII. Corporatism

Another Quebec concept, which is not generally found in the other provinces is corporatism - the right of institutions to have a say in Government. Thus, for example, La Société Saint-Jean Baptiste de Montréal (SSJBM) expected to be consulted on the Crisis and wanted another Quebec institution, "a constituent assembly", to be convened. (La Presse, 31 October 1970).

Even before the Crisis the SSJBM expected to be consulted. (F.-A. Angers, Le Devoir, 16 October 1970).

Similarly the seven Common Front leaders, without consulting their rank and file, believed they could be part of the very political petition of 14 October 1970. The petition of Wednesday, 14 October 1970, was a very unfortunate example of corporatism and intellectuals at work. Corporatism as a Quebec phenomenon is discussed in Chapter III (supra).

The Common Front also issued another declaration, almost a directive, addressed to the Quebec Government on 18 October 1970 in concert with the PQ leaders, particularly Parizeau, who represented the Party in the drafting. (See Appendix "M").

XIX. **Carole de Vault** (born 1945)

Carole de Vault was not a major participant at all in the October Crisis. A student at UQAM and an ardent Parti Québécois member, she worked on Jacques Parizeau's election campaign in the constituency of Ahuntsic for the 29 April 1970 election and later he chose her to head up his contestation of the election to the surprise of the PQ Constituency Executive. Subsequently, they became "lovers" until the end of 1970. (Carole de Vault & William Johnson, 1982 at p. 86.) Parizeau did not take the affair as seriously. (Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at p. 546.). The details of the de Vault narrative are set out in greater detail in Appendix "O."

De Vault's story is unique because it describes first-hand, so much of the October Crisis from so many points of view. All PQ and FLQ members and sympathizers have been very careful not to give any details of the Crisis, not publicly known, while the Duchaîne Report and the Keable Commission danced a tightrope in avoiding questions and witnesses, which might have led to accounts of Parti Québécois/FLQ sympathies or in particular to the actions of

Parizeau during the Crisis.

Duchaîne in particular, did not question de Vault, although she was available, particularly during the long period she was in the hands of the Keable Commission. De Vault's story, as only an insider's can, illustrates the lack of impartiality of the Duchaîne and Keable enquiries. Both Keable and Duchaîne, however, seem to have been under severe pressure from the Parti Québécois government and thus the qualified nature of their reporting is understandable.

In particular de Vault describes the following experiences, which no student or member of the PQ or member of the FLQ really does:

1) She was **"one of the 25,000 marching in the streets of Montreal"** in 1969, against Bill 63 (Premier Jean-Jacques Bertrand's and the Union Nationale's language law) and then went to Quebec and demonstrated before the National Assembly. Shortly thereafter she was dismissed from her job at Steinberg's. (Carole de Vault & William Johnson, 1982 at pp.73-74).

2) She was part of the dismayed reaction, even anger, in Parizeau's election headquarters, when it was finally learned that he and the Parti Québécois had lost the election of April 29, 1970. (ibid. pp.78-79).

3) She is able to describe personally how she and young PQ members reacted to the FLQ kidnapping of Cross, to the reading of the FLQ Manifesto and then to the kidnapping of Laporte (ibid. at pp. 81-92).

4) She describes, like no other participant has, the student assembly at UQAM on the morning of October 15, and Robert Lemieux's last press conference in the Nelson Hotel that evening. (ibid.at pp. 98-101).

5) Who else has so well described the reaction of herself and of fellow students to the application of the War Measures Act Regulation on 16 October 1970 and her description of the last student meeting at UQAM at noon that day? **"A jittery mood pervaded the room … It was too late now to play at revolution. This was serious business."** (ibid. at p. 103). Carole and many students left early. **"Our hearts were no longer in it."** (ibid. at p. 104.) These last seven words give a better impression of the student collapse than all the books on Crisis.

6) Her personal account of Jacques Parizeau sitting in her apartment telephoning various persons including Claude Ryan and Marcel Pepin about **"a parallel government or a provisional government." … "You know, your apartment will be historic, because you will be able to say that the parallel government began here."** (ibid. 1982 at p. 94).

7) The lackadaisical manner of her recruitment into the FLQ and of Michel Frankland and the morsels of information on other cells that were unnecessarily provided her is instructive of the lack of discipline of at least the latter-day FLQ. (ibid. at pp.108-111). At one point, Robert Comeau had doubts about de Vault and accused her of having gone over to the police, but it did not seem to affect her status in the FLQ at all. (ibid. at pp.152-153).

8) We learn more about the activities of Robert Comeau and his Viger Information Cell from de Vault, than from all the writings on the Crisis by Comeau himself, or any other FLQ member or sympathizer.

9) De Vault describes FLQ operations from 1970 to the end of 1974 and of the vainglorious young members, of that period taken up with the euphoria of their secret exploits, although they were never successful. The post FLQ members seemed to have been dreamers, whose adventures resembled the antics of an old Marx Brothers film.

They stole dynamite, which they then sequestered in Carole's apartment, but the police

substituted false dynamite, prepared and labeled at CIL, in Beloeil, Quebec. The "dynamite", of course never exploded. As a result of the information de Vault and others provided to the Montreal police, they knew exactly what the FLQ was up to from 1 January 1971 for four years.

10) At least two other FLQ members (Michel Frankland and Francis Séguin), upon being arrested, became informers, in order to avoid prosecution. On one occasion de Vault, by the very clever planting of a tidbit of false information was able to learn the identity of one informer, without arousing the suspicion of her controller or the informer. The story of de Vault, who was herself an intelligent, well-read adventurer, has many intriguing moments.

11) De Vault has been deprecated by the FLQ, by separatists generally, by the press and by much of the public, which is the fate of all informers. Her testimony is revelatory of the attacks against a turn-coat, but on whose side were they? She, in her skewed way, believed she was supporting our democratic society against terrorists. And effectively she was. (ibid. at p. 196.)

12) De Vault's comments on the criticism of her role as a turncoat are revelatory. (E.g. see the observations of Lysianne Gagnon at ibid. p. 279.) Everyone seems to forget, nevertheless that de Vault, turned informer at the insistence of Alice and Jacques Parizeau, in order to save Parizeau's reputation. (Pierre Duchesne, 2001 at p. 551).

13) De Vault, to my knowledge, is the only FLQ member ever to disclose FLQ activities, which were not already in the public domain and her testimony was never really refuted by the Duchaîne Report or the Keable Commission or anyone else. She and William Johnson did have an involved skirmish with Duchaîne in the newspapers in January 1981 over two lesser details. One concerned Nigel Hamer and the other was whether Louise Cossette-Trudel or Suzanne Lanctôt drove the car which was a look-out, when Cross was

kidnapped on 5 October 1970. De Vault and Johnson seem to have emerged on the right side of these questions which, in any case, were not of major importance.

15) The Keable Commision did convince de Vault to testify publicly after promises that she would not be required to do so. Promises of financial assistance and employment never materialized, however, after the disclosure of her role as an informer. She was left without support or friends. Her treatment by the Parti Québécois government is also revelatory. (ibid. at pp. 276-283).

16) De Vault's narrative referring to Parizeau is important in showing why the Keable Commission and Duchaîne were reluctant to fully investigate the period of the Crisis per se, i.e. in 1970, when Parizeau and de Vault were involved.

XX. The FLQ after the fact - They showed no remorse

"The first duty of a revolutionary is to get away with it." Abbie Hoffman.

The sad reality is that, to my knowledge, no FLQ member has shown any real remorse or regret for his acts, no apologies to Mrs Laporte and family, to Cross and his family, to the families of any of the six earlier murder victims or to society in general. Simard, Lortie, Jacques and Paul Rose wrote a long text (219 pages), but never admitted any real wrong or real remorse. How any of the convicted terrorists was let early out of jail on parole, without some public expression of regret, is beyond comprehension.

After the Crisis, Vallières converted from terrorism to the Parti Québécois, and Gagnon from terrorism to Canadian Marxism, but neither expressed real regret for the harm they did.

On 8 January 1981, Nigel Barry Hamer denounced his past in a long statement deposited in

Court during his trial and published in Le Devoir on 9 and 10 January 1981. He offered no real apologies for the FLQ, except that they were unsuccessful. Here is an excerpt on Hamer's thoughts on terrorism:

"Not only is terrorism ineffective, but in addition it is counter-productive. It harms legal organizations (unions, political groups and parties, community groups) by establishing an atmosphere of suspicion and repression. (My translation; Nigel Hamer, Le Devoir, 10 January 1981; Manon Leroux, 2002 at p. 69). Hamer was apparently let off with a suspended sentence. Pierre Schneider in "Boum Baby Boom, la véritable histoire de Bozo-les-culottes", 2002 gives a sympathetic, but self-indulgent account as an FLQ member, but is unrepentant for any harm he may have done to others.

The FLQ members might also have apologized to the Parti Québécois leaders and to the leaders of the Common Front (the CSN, FTQ & CEQ) to whom they also caused so much harm, by being linked to them in the public eye. Of course the FLQ cannot be fully blamed for the discomfiture of persons, who opportunistically supported FLQ aims during the Crisis, but failed to condemn FLQ methods, until too late.

XXI. <u>The only recorded real remorse – Alain Lanctôt</u>

On 1 November 2000, Alain Lanctôt, son of FLQ members Jacques and Louise Lanctôt who participated in the kidnapping of James R. Cross, wrote a letter to Jean Laporte, son of Pierre Laporte on the 30th anniversary of the death of his father. Both Alain Lanctôt and Jean Laporte

were eleven at the time of the Crisis. Alain Lanctôt's long, passionate letter was published in Le Devoir:

It read in part:

"It is impossible for me to apologize for the death of your father. It is impossible for me to apologize for the acts of the FLQ. It is impossible for me to apologize for the pain and suffering that you sustained. It is impossible for me…It is impossible for me! It is impossible for me, because I, myself, like you, was eleven years old in October 1970. It is impossible for me, because I also suffered in silence. It is impossible for me because just like you, I lost my whole family, not physically but psychologically. My whole family, because, since my early childhood, they hid everything from me. My whole family, because they lied to me from the start.

"Thirty years to be asked "Are you the son of? Are you the brother of?" Thirty years to ask oneself "Why?" Thirty years to ask oneself "How?" Thirty years …Thirty years! Thirty years, have you thought about it? Have they thought about it? I deeply doubt it. I doubt that one day they will admit their mistakes. I doubt that one day they will admit their remorse, but I do not doubt that their reply will be scathing." (My translation; Le Devoir, 1 November 2000).