

# Pioneers of Feminism and Unionism: Léa Roback and Madeleine Parent

Special feature by the Cinémathèque québécoise, in collaboration with the RéQEF, 2023

These transcriptions were extracted from footage shot during the filming of *Madeleine Parent, tisserande de solidarités* (2002), directed by Sophie Bissonnette.

## THE OCTOBER CRISIS IN QUEBEC (1970)

### The October Crisis in Quebec (1970)

Sophie Bissonnette: Were there times when you found it difficult to be away from here? When you felt distant from . . . I'm thinking of October 1970.

Madeleine Parent: Well, I can tell you that had we been there, we would have ended up at Fullum, because . . . we . . . When Kent and I went to Montréal that weekend, we were listening to the radio, and we heard Pierre Laporte's appeal to Bourassa to save him. And we heard Bourassa's horrible negative reply. After that, nothing could surprise us. And the fact that they had saved the British diplomat because it was important to the federal government to make sure there were no diplomatic victims, but that Laporte could be so easily sacrificed, Kent and I said to each other, "Our battle is in Ontario, let's get back there." So I went to see our neighbour, who still had our house key, and I said, "If the police show up at our door, go out right away, with the key, and tell them they can go inside and look around." And that's exactly what happened. She watched for them, and when they went in and looked around, they saw that we weren't there, so they left. But I know what would have happened if we had been there.

In fact, our house was broken into several times. I think one of my friends counted thirteen times, but I myself lost count. And in two of those break-ins, all they did was take an old portable mimeograph machine out of a closet. They opened it up on the carpet. They noticed . . . [technical problem] They opened up the old mimeograph machine. They realized it was dry, which meant it had not been used at all in the recent past. They left it open on the carpet and they left, leaving the door broken. During a later visit, we talked about it with Gérald Godin. He told us . . . that they wanted to see if it had been used to make pamphlets for the FLQ. I said, "I was lucky they didn't forge a pamphlet and put it through our machine," because Paul Benoît had done that with another document he had found in our offices. But no. So I got rid of that machine. But we would have liked to be involved.