

## Paul Desmarais

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**Paul Desmarais, Sr.** (born [January 4, 1927](#)), [Canadian](#) financier, is the tenth [richest person in Canada](#) and is considered to be one of the country's most powerful men.

Born in [Sudbury, Ontario](#), Desmarais took control of his family's bus service, Sudbury Bus Lines, in [1951](#). He then acquired additional bus lines in the Ottawa area and Quebec City (including Quebec Autobus and Provincial Transport). By [1968](#), Desmarais's holding company, Trans-Canada Corporation Fund (TCCF), owned the bus line Provincial Transport, an interest in Toronto-based Imperial Life Assurance and Gesca Ltée, (which had an interest in the Montreal paper [La Presse](#)). That year TCCF made a share-exchange offer with [Power Corporation of Canada](#), headquartered in [Montreal, Quebec](#), whereby Paul Desmarais became Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

Amongst its numerous worldwide holdings, Desmarais'; Power Corporation of Canada owns 25% of Groupe Bruxelles Lambert , one of Belgium's top ten companies which, in [2001](#) acquired control of the [German](#) publishing giant, [Bertelsmann AG](#).

In [1974](#), Desmarais named employee [Paul Martin, Jr.](#) as president of a Power Corporation subsidiary, [Canada Steamship Lines Inc.](#). In 1981, he sold the company to Laurence Pathy and Paul Martin, Jr., the latter of whom became [Prime Minister of Canada](#) on [December 12, 2003](#). In 1978 he was made an Officer of the [Order of Canada](#) and was promoted to Companion in 1986.

Desmarais has two sons: Paul Jr. and André (who is married to former Canadian Prime Minister [Jean Chrétien](#)'s daughter [France](#)).

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**Paul Desmarais, Jr.** is the eldest son of Paul Desmarais, Sr. He was the Chairman and Co-Chief Executive Officer of Power Corporation of Canada.

For many years, astute political observers have noted what appears to be an unusually powerful web

of influence over Canadian federal politics by wealthy Canadian businessman and Power Corporation founder, Paul Desmarais senior. The number of Prime Ministers and other elected and influential Canadians financially beholden to the Quebec based Canadian nationalist is astonishing.

In an Ottawa Citizen article of May 2, 1995 columnist Paul Gessell asked "Why does Desmarais have a direct pipeline into every Prime Minister's office, regardless of who occupies that post or what party is in power?" Following is LifeSite's summary of the most significant elements of the Desmarais web of influence.

- Current Prime Minister Jean Chretien sat on the board of Power Corp. subsidiary Consolidated Bathurst Inc. before becoming leader of the Liberal Party. Chretien's daughter France is married to Paul Desmarais' son Andre. Andre was involved in Canadian power station projects in China. Chretien personally withdrew Canadian support of a UN condemnation of China's human rights abuses after Chinese officials threatened to take power station projects away from Canadian firms. The Prime Minister's nephew, Raymond Chretien, is now Canada's Ambassador to France." Chretien's "advisor, counsellor and strategist" for the past 30 years has been Mitchel Sharp, who brought Chretien into politics when he was Finance Minister. From 1981 onwards Sharp was Vice-Chairman for North America of David Rockefeller's Trilateral Commission.
- In her April 17, 2003 National Post column Diane Francis notes that Chretien heir apparent, Paul Martin, was hired in the 1960s to work for Paul Desmarais senior by Maurice Strong. In 1974, Francis writes, "Desmarais made Martin president of Canada Steamship Lines and then, in 1981, made him spectacularly rich by selling the company to him and a partner?" She follows, "It all begs a number of questions, Did Mr. Desmarais give away the company to Mr. Martin? Did Mr. Desmarais lend him the money or guarantee the loan? And what does this mean in terms of his allegiance or loyalty to Mr. Desmarais and his empire in Canada and France.?"
- An August 5, 1994 Globe and Mail article noted that "Another prime minister, long-time family friend, Pierre Trudeau (now deceased), sits on Power's star-studded international advisory board."
- Ted Johnson, A former Trudeau assistant, and a friend of Chretien's chief of staff, Eddie Goldenberg (more powerful than most MPs and even Cabinet Ministers), was vice-president, secretary and legal counsel to Power Corp.
- Michael Pitfield, the super-bureaucrat under the Trudeau government, was a vice-chairman of Power Corp and is still listed as a Director Emeritus.
- Maurice Strong became President of Power Corp by his mid-thirties. From there he became a Liberal Party bureaucrat and created the controversial, left-wing Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). In 1976, still under Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, he was appointed to run Petro Canada, the state-run oil company. This wealthy ex-Desmarais employee is an architect of the Kyoto accord and has been a powerful advocate of UN world governance and world de-population. He is an advisor to both the UN Secretary General and the president of the World Bank. With former Soviet President Michael Gorbachev he co-authored the infamous "Earth Charter" which Strong, Gorbachev and numerous prominent allies are hoping will guide a new world order based on "planetary ethics". The Charter reads like a new age ten commandments. Strong also supports a one world religion.
- Former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Desmarais go back at least as far as 1972. Mulroney friend Ian MacDonald described Desmarais as "Mulroney's mentor in the business world.?" Mulroney has done legal work for Desmarais since his spectacular election loss at the end of his second term as Prime Minister.

- Former Mulroney Cabinet Minister Don Mazankowski is currently Power's company director.
- Former Ontario Conservative premiers William Davis and John Robarts sat on Power's national advisory board.
- John Rae, the brother of former Ontario New Democratic (Socialist) Premier Bob Rae is currently listed as Power's Executive Vice-President, Office of the Chairman of the Executive Committee (Paul Desmarais).
- Former Quebec premier Daniel Johnson worked for Power from 1973 to 1981 and in the last of those three years was vice-president.
- The May 11, 1996 Toronto Star reported that "Desmarais' worldwide political connections have resulted in an international advisory board featuring such luminaries as former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt; Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, former oil minister of Saudi Arabia, Paul Volcker, former head of the U.S. Federal Reserve Board and former prime minister Pierre Trudeau."
- There have been indications that the fabled de Rothchild family of Europe has been playing a role in Desmarais' international expansion. For example, the Nov. 20, 2002 Financial Post covered the opening of Sir Evelyn de Rothchild's investment bank's Montreal office. Quebec's business elite were present in force, headed by "Paul Desmarais Jr.

Ottawa Citizen's Gessell ends his column on Desmarais, "When Chretien retires and a leadership convention is held to replace him, chances are Desmarais will be on hand. Finance Minister (now former) Paul Martin (from Quebec, as were Trudeau, Mulroney and Chretien) could quite possibly be Chretien's successor. And who taught Martin how to succeed in business? None other than his former employer, Paul Desmarais."