

Button

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This round white diaper pin badge features an illustration of a man in black and white portraiture on a green background. It is surrounded by black and green text.

Accession Number 2022.12.68

Materials metal, paper, plastic

Measurements 5,3 cm

Historical context

The button explicitly calls for the release of Pierre-Paul Geoffroy. In the early 1960s, the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ), a Quebec independence movement, was founded. Members of this group organized a number of daring acts, including bomb attacks. A series of bombings took place between May 1968 and March 1969, including one at the Montreal Stock Exchange. In connection with these events, on March 7, 1969, 25-year-old FLQ member Pierre-Paul Geoffroy was found guilty by Judge André Fabien of 129 charges (a record in the British Commonwealth). Other FLQ members were also imprisoned for similar actions, often in federal penitentiaries. The term political prisoner began to be used. The term is not universally accepted. Indeed, many feel it has no place in Canadian society, which recognizes freedom of speech and association.

Over the years, activists have given their support and called for the release of these political prisoners, of whom Pierre-Paul Geoffroy is certainly the best known. Picketing in front of the courthouse, placards during Operation French McGill, threats to newspapers by Felquist cells, etc. A decade later, events revived this struggle. In April 1979, Pierre-Paul Geoffroy was denied parole for a fourth time. Then, on October 16, 1979, the anniversary of the proclamation of the War Measures Act in connection with the October 1970 crisis, the Comité d'amnistie générale (CAG) was created, supporting the release of all Quebec political prisoners. The CAG circulates a petition demanding their immediate and unconditional release (including that of Pierre-Paul Geoffroy). The committee quickly received support from the Ligue des droits et libertés, Simone and Michel Chartrand, the CSN, the Groupe socialiste des travailleurs, the Regroupement des militants syndicaux and others. Pierre-Paul Geoffroy was granted parole in April

1980 after serving 11 years of his sentence.

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Photo by Michel Julien