



## HONOR ROLL

# CHARLES BRONFMAN

*Born on June 27, 1931, in Montreal. Resident in Montreal. Named co-chairman, with his brother Edgar, of The Seagram Company Ltd. on Nov. 5, 1986. He announced the establishment of The CRB Foundation on Dec. 11, 1986, to promote understanding in Canadian and Jewish affairs.*

## 'A Chance To Make Dreams Come True'

It is a major charitable donation—the precise total private, but amounting to a multimillion-dollar fund for a foundation whose main goals, the donor admits, are “deliberately vague.” The CRB—for Charles R. Bronfman—Foundation, which came into being late in 1986, has as its mandate “the enhancement of Canadianism and the worldwide promotion of the unity of the Jewish people.” Bronfman, the Montreal-based co-chairman of the huge Seagram Company Ltd. liquor empire, explained that “I am smart enough to know how dumb I am about a lot of things. I would rather let the foundation develop on its own without setting specific rules in advance. It represents a chance for a lot of people to make some pretty big dreams come true.”

The headquarters for the foundation—which is expected to distribute about \$4 million in grants in 1987—will be in Montreal, and eventually the foundation will open offices in Jerusalem and New York. In its Canadian affairs section, administrators and advisers will include Thomas Axworthy, former principal secretary to Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, and Lise Bissonnette, former editor of the French-language Montreal daily newspaper *Le Devoir*.

Although the foundation's goals are not clearly spelled out, Bronfman said that its Canadian activities could include the funding of historical or biographical books. On the Jewish side of the foundation's mandate, Bronfman

says that he is particularly interested in moderating rivalries in Israel and elsewhere between Orthodox and Reform Jews, and between Jews of European and Oriental descent.

The foundation's dual thrusts reflect the personality and interests of a man who is both a major figure in the Canadian business world and one of the country's most active fund-raisers for Jewish causes. “I express my Jewishness through doing things for the Jewish people,” said Bronfman, who seldom attends synagogue. With a personal wealth estimated at more than \$1 billion, Bronfman added that he is “very aware of how fortunate I am. I live a wonderful life.”

Growing up in the shadow of his empire-building father, the late Samuel Bronfman—known in his lifetime for a fiery temper and exacting standards—Bronfman says that he learned early in life that “Dad would accept nothing less than excellence from us.” For years, said Charles, his older brother “would fight my father to have his way while I stayed under Dad's thumb.” But in 1969 Charles acted on his own to help save the Montreal Expos baseball franchise after most of the original backers dropped out. “That was my coming of age as a man,” said Bronfman. Bronfman is deeply appreciative of his wealth, which he said “gives me the chance to do what I want for myself, and for the things I so deeply believe in. At the end of the day, you cannot ask for more than that.”