

## **IN MEMORIAM**

**Info-Cult has been very fortunate to have volunteers who give so generously of their time, knowledge and energy to our organization.**

### **Marilyn Wener**

Marilyn was one of the founders in the late 1970s of a Montreal parents' group which eventually became Info-Cult. In the early 1970s before "cults" became an issue of concern and before resources existed for families having a cult-related problem, her family experienced a personal loss. Marilyn funneled the pain and suffering of this tragedy into action and became involved in the organizing of educational activities, as well as providing moral support to others who needed someone to turn to who could understand what they were experiencing.

In addition, she started different projects to help fund Info-Cult. One of her pet projects was recovering golf balls from a lake near her country house. After cleaning and packaging them in egg cartons she would sell them. She was active until the end and her great strength and character and her presence will be sorely missed.

### **Jacques Hébert**

Jacque Hébert's involvement with Info-Cult was not as well known as his participation in a number of other public causes, but no less important. As a member of our board for many years his passionate belief in liberty and in helping the underdog manifested itself in his thoughtful observations on the cult phenomenon. His views reflected the commitment of our organization for education, awareness and assistance. An extract from an allocution he gave during an Info-Cult press conference in 1991 continues to inspire us today.

"When the Jehovah's Witnesses were being persecuted by Maurice Duplessis, the premier of Quebec in the 1950s, I found myself, without hesitation, on the side of the Jehovah's Witnesses. With other men of freedom more prestigious than me: the Frank Scotts, the Pierre Trudeaus, the Michael Oliviers, the Gerard Pelletiers, the Patenaudes and many others.

Yet, I had no particular sympathy for that cult which like many others rejects all those that don't bow to their brand of the "truth" and considers all criticism as negative, and of "satanic" inspiration. Because I try hard in all circumstances to be on the side of freedom, I above all don't want to prevent anyone from practicing the religion of their choice, from propagating their beliefs however absurd and weird the theories are. I am ready to fight for religious freedom but also ready to fight against those that outrageously abuse the freedom that our society grants them – thank God! One of the most democratic in the world...

I summarize in two words: cults, all cults have the right to exist in a free society, the right to express themselves; to recruit followers. But the public also has the right to know their methods, their real objectives, their financial situation... And the public has the right to demand that cults, all cults respect the laws like any organization, like any citizen."\*

Jacques Hébert is no longer with us, but he is and always will be a source of inspiration, and his words will continue to resonate for all who struggle for rights and freedom.

\* Translation by Info-Cult from the original French text.