

### 93.10EM Emergency Resolution: Battered Women's Defence

[Whereas,] Rationale:

NCWC recognized the inequalities of Canada's justice system for women in resolutions passed in 1989 and 1991. In 1989, it supported alternatives to incarceration for non-violent women offenders. It has advocated strongly for change in the area of violence against women, most recently in 1992. It was a member of the Steering Committee of the Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women and subsequently fully supported the Report of the Task Force, "Creating Choices".

In 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada recognized the battered women's syndrome defence in the Lavallee decision. Approximately 12 women are currently incarcerated in Canada for having killed their abusive partners. They have not been able to avail themselves of the battered women's defence because of the timing or particular circumstances of their cases. The sentences imposed upon them vary widely, from community disposition to life imprisonment. NCWC supports the request of its federate, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, that an en bloc review of these cases be undertaken.

[RESOLVED,] The National Council of Women of Canada urges the Government of Canada to undertake an en bloc review with a view to the release of women currently imprisoned as a result of their involvement in the death of abusive partners.