

charged with crimes against the person had been exposed to domestic violence as children. Research found that the rate of wife-beating was 1,000 higher for men who had observed violence in childhood than for men who had not had similar experiences.

- A 1982 Canada-wide study found that 54% of all assaults against separated women were committed by former marital partners. In 1989, 119 women were murdered in Canada by current or former husbands or partners. Of all women murdered in Canada, 62% are killed by their partners. Trudy Don, the Executive Director of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses Against Abused Women reported that in the last four or five years there has been a marked increase in the number of women killed after they have, in effect, followed all the expected stages involved in leaving a violent relationship. “They have gone through the transition house, through counselling, through the legal system and through the custody battles for the children, and she still gets killed” (5:80).

Many of the witnesses implied in their submissions that these facts speak to the endemic, deeply rooted nature of violence against women in our society. They emphasized that the sheer volume of female victimization makes it unlikely that these incidents are independent of our system of values and attitudes and that the perpetrators are all aberrant or insane individuals. The Minister Responsible for the Status of Women informed the Committee that male violence against women is a form of the discrimination in our society that exists on a continuum that includes sexist jokes, pornography, sexual harassment, prostitution, emotional, psychological and physical wife assault, date violence, child abuse, incest, and individual, serial and mass murders (1:14).

Diane Lemieux, Coordinator, *Regroupement québécois des Centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel*, suggested to the Committee that the violence perpetrated against women is analogous to the aggression toward women that occurs during war time. Women in war locations are raped, threatened, harassed, beaten and killed. She likened rape crisis centres and shelters for battered women to a Red Cross for women where the physical and psychological wounds of the survivors are treated (13:5). Patricia Marshall, the Executive Director of METRAC, reiterated this war metaphor in her evidence. “I said this was a war on women. There is a need for war budget” (5:109).