

Poverty is the worst form of  
violence.

*Mahatma Gandhi*

Anyone who has ever struggled  
with poverty knows how  
extremely expensive it is to be  
poor.

*James A. Baldwin*

There is enough for everybody's  
need, but not for everybody's  
greed.

*Mohandas K. Gandhi*

Poverty is like punishment for a crime you didn't commit. And one never really forgets either — everything serves as a constant reminder of it.

*Eli Khamarov*

Maybe it's low-wage work in general that has the effect of making you feel like a pariah. When I watch TV over my dinner at night, I see a world in which almost everyone makes \$15 an hour or more, and I'm not just thinking of the anchor folks. The sitcoms and dramas are about fashion designers or schoolteachers or lawyers, so it's easy for a fast-food worker or nurse's aide to conclude that she is an anomaly — the only one, or almost the only one, who hasn't been invited to the party. And in a sense she would be right: the poor have disappeared from the culture at large, from its political rhetoric and intellectual endeavors as well as from its daily entertainment. Even religion seems to have little to say about the plight of the poor, if that tent revival was a fair sample. The moneylenders have finally gotten Jesus out of the temple.

*Barbara Ehrenreich, Ch. 2: Scrubbing in Maine (pp. 117-118)*

It is easy enough to tell the poor to accept their poverty as God's will when you yourself have warm clothes and plenty of food and medical care and a roof over your head and no worry about the rent. But if you want them to believe you—try to share some of their poverty and see if you can accept it as God's will yourself!

*Thomas Merton, Seeds of Contemplation, chapter 14, p. 107 (1949).*

Today I see more clearly than yesterday that back of the problem of race and color, lies a greater problem which both obscures and implements it: and that is the fact that so many civilized persons are willing to live in comfort even if the price of this is poverty, ignorance and disease of the majority of their fellowmen; that to maintain this privilege men have waged war until today war tends to become universal and continuous, and the excuse for this war continues largely to be color and race.

*W.E.B. (William Edward Burghardt) Du Bois (1868–1963), U.S. civil rights leader, author. The Souls of Black Folk, preface to 1969 edition (1903).*

We must measure our progress by the standard of care that we set for the least privileged among us [...] The true challenge of leadership is to rally a nation to its unfulfilled promise. To build a society based on equality, not privilege; on duty, not entitlement. A society based on compassion and caring; not indifference or neglect.

*Paul Martin, Prime Minister - Elect, Toronto,  
November 14, 2003*

Mr. Speaker, we must put Canada's families and children first...we will begin immediate consultations with our partners so as to be ready in the next budget to put in place a long term investment plan. To enable Canada to turn the corner on child poverty and break the cycle of poverty and dependency for Canadian families.

*Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, PM's response to Speech from the Throne, October, 2002*

We should essentially establish the elimination of child poverty as a great national objective, not unlike what we did with the case of the deficit.

*The Hon. Paul Martin, Federal Minister of Finance*

## POVERTY IS . . .

Feeling ashamed when my dad can't get a job

Not buying books at the book fair

Not getting to go to birthday parties

Not getting a hot dog on a hot dog day

Pretending that you forgot your lunch

Not being able to play hockey

Being teased for the way you are dressed

Not getting to go on school trips.

*Grade 4 & 5 children, North Bay, Ont. Excerpts*

*from Our Neighbour's Voices: Will We Listen?*

*(The Interfaith Social Reform Coalition)*

Like slavery and apartheid,  
poverty is not natural. It is man-  
made and can be overcome and  
eradicated by the actions of  
human beings. Make Poverty  
History. Make History in 2005.

*Nelson Mandela's speech to  
Trafalgar Square crowd, 2005*

We are the first generation that can look extreme and stupid poverty in the eye, look across the water to Africa and elsewhere and say this and mean it: we have the cash, we have the drugs, we have the science - but do we have the will? Do we have the will to make poverty history? Some say we can't afford to. I say we can't afford not to.

*Bono's Speech to Labour Party Conference,  
2005*

This coalition is serious and this campaign is going to win. But first we need to be clear about the challenge to overcome. Five years ago world leaders committed to halving poverty by the year 2015. Five years on, they're failing on that promise. And they will continue to fail unless they fundamentally change their ways. And they won't change unless we tell them to.

Starting today.

*Adrian Lovett's Speech to Trafalgar Square crowd, 2005*

Poverty is the single biggest  
killer in the world today, and the  
fact that it is the most  
preventable is bizarre, insane.

*Minnie Driver, actress*

Recognise that the world is  
hungry for action, not words!  
*Nelson Mandela's speech to  
Trafalgar Square crowd, 2005*

The war against terror is bound  
up in the war against poverty.  
*Colin Powell, 2005*

Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom. In this new century, millions of people in the world's poorest countries remain imprisoned, enslaved, and in chains. They are trapped in the prison of poverty. It is time to set them free.

*Nelson Mandela's speech to Trafalgar Square crowd, 2005*

Poverty makes you sad as well  
as wise.

*Bertolt Brecht*

Poverty is to be without sufficient money, but it is also to have little hope for better things. It is a feeling that one is unable to control one's destiny, that one is powerless in a society that respects power. The poor have very limited access to means of making known their situation and their needs. To be poor is to feel apathy, alienation from society, entrapment, hopelessness and to believe that whatever you do will not turn out successfully.

*Canadian Royal Commission on the Status of Woman, Report, 1970*

If there is no struggle, there is no progress - Those who profess to favor freedom and yet renounce controversy are people who want crops without plowing the ground.

*Frederick Douglass, Abolitionist  
Leader 1817 – 1895*

We cannot allow some people to be left at the back of the human rights bus... We must ensure the rights of individual groups or people --be they indigenous peoples, or peoples of Asian or African or American descent, or Jews or Muslims-- are not sacrificed on an altar of progress for some while there are setbacks to others.

*Matthew Coon Come, National Chief Of The Assembly Of First Nations*

If I am not for myself, then who  
will be for me? And if I am only  
for myself, then what am I? And  
if not now, when?

*Rabbi Hillel*

As long as someone else  
controls your history the truth  
shall remain just a mystery

*Ben Harper*

Solidarity is not an act of charity,  
but mutual aid between forces  
fighting for the same objective.

*Samora Machel*