

- D2** the Minister of Health and Welfare, on behalf of the Children's Bureau within Health and Welfare Canada, be required to table in both Houses of Parliament an annual report on progress made toward the elimination of child poverty. This report should examine and assess child programs and services to ensure that they are effective, economical and continuing to meet their intended objectives.
- D3** the Children's Bureau within Health and Welfare Canada prepare a "Charter for Children" as a means of ensuring that all Canadian children have the opportunity to develop and realize their fullest potential. This "Charter for Children" should follow the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children are our future and Canadians must be prepared to commit immediately the time and other resources necessary to ensure that all children have the opportunity to develop fully their potential and to have productive and fulfilling lives. Children and youth must be our first priority, for the sake of children and of all Canadians. The children of today are the adults of tomorrow, and are our most valuable resource. Canadians must undertake the necessary investment. Echoing the sentiment of many witnesses, Professor Waller told the Sub-Committee that:

if you do not invest in children now, you are going to increase the deficit substantially in the future, because not only are you going to have these immediate effects of what you have to do to pay for people who are illiterate, who drop out of school or who are on welfare, but you are also going to have the ripple effects.<sup>168</sup>

In its appearance before the Sub-Committee, the Dalhousie Health and Community Services Centre of Ottawa asked the following question: "Is there the political will to make [addressing child poverty] happen? I think that is the issue of the day."<sup>169</sup> The Sub-Committee's response is, without doubt, "yes". Our children are our future. The time for action is now.

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<sup>168</sup> *Proceedings*, Issue 13, p. 23.

<sup>169</sup> *Proceedings*, Issue 10, p. 48.