



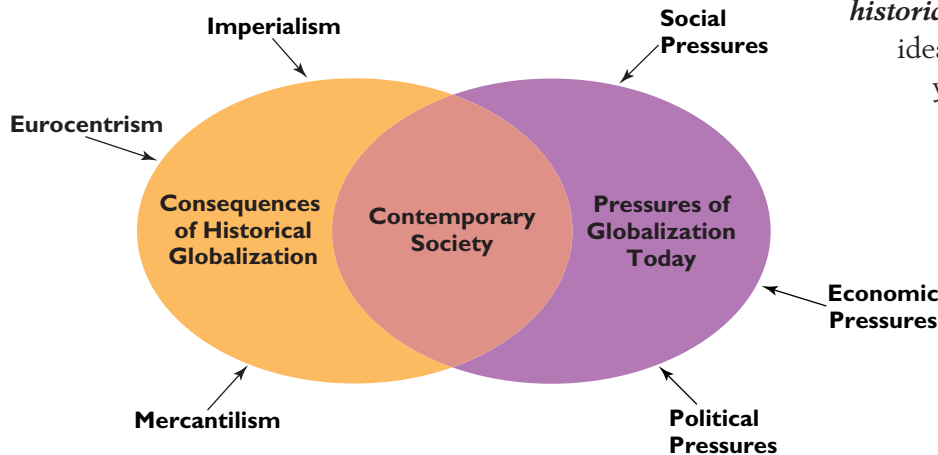
# Historical Origins and Contemporary Issues

## Chapter

# 9

**Figure 9-1**

In this chapter you will examine some of the contemporary economic, social, and political problems among Indigenous communities that can be attributed, directly or indirectly, to the continuing impact of historical globalization and imperialism. As “global” citizens, how much responsibility must we accept for these contemporary problems? ▼



## Chapter Focus

*To what extent should contemporary society respond to the legacies of historical globalization?* So far, in working toward an answer to this question, you’ve looked at some examples of early contact between cultures, and the forms this interaction took. You have seen that contact was not always an easy relationship, and that in many cases imperializing countries felt it was their duty to “civilize” people from the colonies by assimilating them into the dominant society.

Today, attitudes toward other cultures have changed, yet the effects of historical globalization are still with us. Social problems, such as abuse, alcoholism, and suicide, plague many Indigenous communities. In some former colonies, political and civil unrest, human rights abuses, and poverty continue to hobble progress. What has been done recently to address these problems? Do we have an obligation to respond to these problems, even though we were not around when they were caused? If so, how far does our responsibility extend? And if we choose to ignore these problems, what is likely to happen?

## Chapter Issue

This chapter focuses on some contemporary global issues that have roots in historical globalization and the policies of imperialism. From these examples, you will begin to explore the Chapter Issue: *To what extent are contemporary societies affected by historical imperialism?* As you gather ideas and opinions about this issue, you should be in a better position to begin to form an opinion about the Main Issue for Part 2: *To what extent should contemporary society respond to the legacies of historical globalization?*

## Contemporary Social Issues and Historical Imperialism

### Question for Inquiry

- How does historical imperialism relate to current social issues?

Does the past affect the present? We all like to think that we are free agents, able to make our own choices and carve our own future. But think about it. Doesn't your family history have some effect on your life? Did your parents or grandparents come to Canada from another country? Can you imagine how your life might have been different if they had not made that choice? Some of you may have grandparents who lived through, or fought in, the Second World War. How do you think that experience affected your family? Like it or not, the past influences all of us, in good ways and in bad.

As you read in Chapter 8, even before Canada became a nation in 1867, the governments of Upper and Lower Canada were passing laws designed to assimilate First Nations peoples into colonial society. One of these, the practice of sending First Nations children to residential schools, continued until the 1970s and beyond in some parts of the country. To get a sense of how history—and in particular, imperialism—may be connected to social conditions in Canada today, let's look more closely at how these schools operated.

### Social Effects Associated with Residential Schools

Where do we learn about our culture? For most of us, our first and most important source of information is our family. Schools also play a role in reinforcing what we learn about our culture at home, as you read in Chapter 5. But what would it be like to be taken away from your culture at an early age? What if the purpose of school was to *undo* all that you learned from your parents? This was the experience of many residential school students in Canada.

In 1884, the Indian Act was amended to make attendance in Indian schools compulsory for status Indians under the age of 16 until they reached 18 years of age. This legislation created a system of government-funded, church-run **Residential Schools**. The schools were located in every province and territory except Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island.

### Ideas and Opinions

“ I want to get rid of the Indian problem. Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question. Education is in the forefront of their requirements now. ”

—Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932, quoted in J. Leslie and R. Maguire, eds., *The Historical Development of the Indian Act*, 2nd ed. (Ottawa: Treaties and Historical Research Centre, Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1978), p. 115.

Why do you think Duncan Campbell Scott saw education as so important in fulfilling the government's goal of assimilation?



**Figure 9-2**

How would you characterize the distribution pattern of residential schools across Canada? What implications might this have for First Nations and Inuit children in far northern communities? What might explain the lack of residential schools in some areas?

One hundred thirty residential schools existed from 1884 to 1996. Students were forced to stay in residences located on the school grounds and were many times forcibly removed from their homes. Parents of children who did not go to school were fined or jailed. Because of the distances between the residential schools and the children's home communities, many students did not have any contact with their parents for up to 10 months at a time. The students were not allowed to speak First Nations languages or Inuktitut in the school. Siblings were usually placed on different floors to make sure this did not happen. They were also not allowed to play games with one another that they had learned at home. Severe punishment was doled out to those who broke this rule.

## Residential Schools in Canada

- 1620–1689:** The Recollets, Jesuits, and Ursulines operate the first boarding schools for First Nations children. These schools eventually closed because of lack of students.
- 1833:** The Mohawk Institute, near Toronto, takes in its first student boarders and becomes a model for the residential school system.
- 1879:** Journalist Nicholas Flood Davin recommends establishing industrial schools to “civilize” the First Nations.
- 1920:** An amendment to the Indian Act makes it mandatory for parents to send their children to school.
- 1948:** A Senate report questions whether children should be removed from their communities and recommends that they attend mainstream schools.
- 1969:** The federal government takes over the running of the schools. It begins closing residential schools. Parents must now give their consent for children to attend.
- 1988:** The first two residential school civil claims are filed.
- 1990:** Phil Fontaine, Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, is the first public figure to say he was abused at a residential school.
- 1991:** A Catholic teaching order, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, presents an apology to First Nations peoples.
- 1993:** The Anglican Church apologizes.
- 1994:** The Presbyterian Church offers First Nations peoples a confession.
- 1995:** Arthur Plint, a former school supervisor, is convicted of 18 counts of indecent assault against students.
- 1996:** The last government-run residential school closes. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Report is released.
- 1998:** The United Church apologizes. Indian Affairs Minister Jane Stewart apologizes on behalf of the government. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation is created.
- 1999:** In one year, 3620 former students file claims against both the government and the churches who ran the schools.
- 2002:** As the number of cases before the courts continues to grow, the government proposes an alternative dispute resolution system to settle claims out of court.
- 2003:** The Anglican and Presbyterian churches sign agreements with the government to compensate former students.
- 2005:** An agreement in principle is signed by the Assembly of First Nations and the government. The agreement provides former students with financial compensation for loss of language and culture without forcing them to give up their right to sue for physical sexual abuse.

**Figure 9-3**

What evidence, if any, do you see in this timeline that the problems associated with the residential school system should be the responsibility of the government?

—Source: adapted from *Time Magazine*, July 28, 2003, pp. 34, 35, and [http://www.irsr-rqpi.gc.ca/english/historical\\_events.html](http://www.irsr-rqpi.gc.ca/english/historical_events.html).





## READING STRATEGY

To better understand the experiences of residential school students, think about how you would have felt if you had been in their place. What would you have thought about your school? How would you have coped?

Flora Merrick is an Ojibwa of the Long Plain First Nation. She attended residential school in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba for 10 years. This is how she remembers her experience there:

*I was punished for speaking my own language and was always frightened and scared of what the teachers and principals would do to me. It was like being in prison.*

*During my stay at Portage la Prairie residential school, I witnessed the injustices of beatings and abuse of other children, some of whom were my siblings. We were treated worse than animals and lived in constant fear. I have carried the trauma of my experience and seeing what happened to other children all my life.*

*I cannot forget one painful memory. It occurred in 1932 when I was 15 years old. My father came to the Portage la Prairie residential school to tell my sister and I that our mother had died and to take us to the funeral. The principal of the school would not let us go with our father to the funeral. My little sister and I cried so much, we were taken away and locked in a dark room for about two weeks.*

*After I was released from the dark room and allowed to be with other residents, I tried to run away to my father and family. I was caught in the bush by teachers and taken back to the school and strapped so severely that my arms were black and blue for several weeks. After my father saw what they did to me, he would not allow me to go back to school after the school year ended.*

—Source: Testimony from the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, <http://www.parl.gc.ca/committee/CommitteePublication.aspx?SourceId=103645>.

Figure 9-4

This picture of students at the St. Peter's Mission Indian Residential School in Grouard, Alberta, was taken in the mid-1920s. How would an Aboriginal Elder interpret this photograph? How might Duncan Campbell Scott see it?

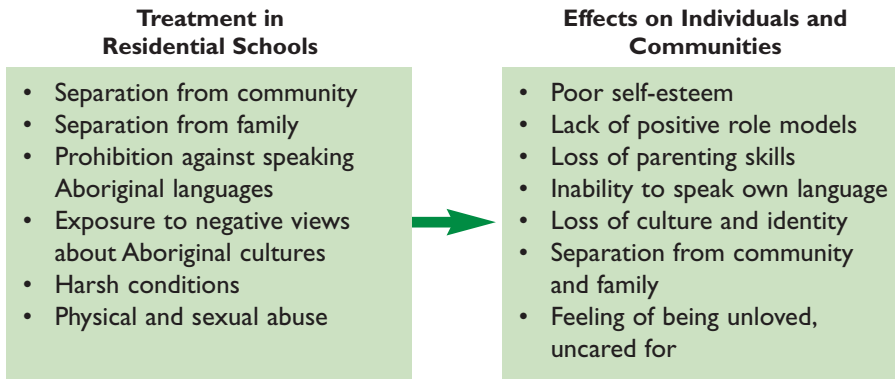


## Social Consequences of Residential Schools

Some people in Canada believe that many of the social problems that Aboriginal communities face today are consequences, directly or indirectly, of the residential school system and the policy of assimilation that underlay them.

Physical and emotional abuse was only part of the problem associated with residential schools. Former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Matthew Coon Come, who attended residential schools in Ontario and Québec for nine years, claims that “Basically, the goal was to take the Indian out of the Indian” (*Time Magazine*, July 28, 2003, p. 35).

As you can see in Figure 9-5, some former residential school students were left with a deep-seated feeling of loss and separation from their families and cultures. Feelings like this can lead to depression, a condition that can, in turn, lead to such social problems as alcohol and drug abuse, family violence, and even suicide. Some experts see many negative long-term effects of the residential school experience. See the next page for other views on this issue.



◀ **Figure 9-5**

Effects of the residential school experience. Consider how the short-term effects listed at left could snowball into long-term effects. For example, if a student of the school lost fluency in his or her first language, how would it affect whether or not the next generation learns the language? And the next generation?

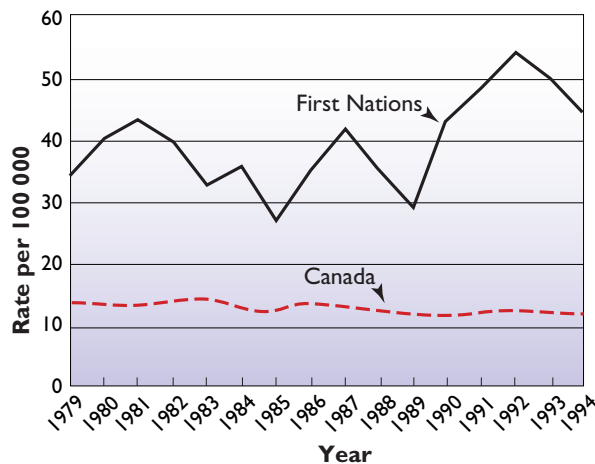
## Ideas and Opinions

“ We heard from a few people who are grateful for what they learned at these schools, but we heard from more who described deep scars—not least in their inability to give and receive love. ”

—Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996. Volume Three: Gathering Strength, [http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/g3\\_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/g3_e.html).

Why might the commission have heard more from those who had bad experiences at residential schools than from students who were not abused?

**Suicide Rate for First Nations and Canada, 1979–1994**



◀ **Figure 9-6**

Suicide rates among First Nations and all of Canada, 1979–1994. In your opinion, to what extent is Canadian society as a whole affected by, or responsible for, the high suicide rate among Aboriginal peoples? Follow the Web link on the *Perspectives on Globalization* website to a CBC radio report about the teen suicide rate on northern Ontario reserves.

Source: Kirmayer, L.J. et al. (1993). *Suicide in Canadian Aboriginal populations: Emerging trends in research and intervention* (Report No.1). Montréal, Québec: Culture & Mental Health Research Unit, Sir Mortimer B. Davis—Jewish General Hospital.

## Fast Facts

According to one study, the lowest rates of teen suicide are found in communities that have made some gains in self-government, land claims, and improved educational services.

—Source: Michael Chandler and Christopher Lalonde, “Cultural Continuity As a Hedge against Suicide in Canada’s First Nations,” *Transcultural Psychiatry*, Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 191–219.

Why do you think these factors might affect a teen’s likelihood of committing suicide?



## Other Perspectives on Residential Schools

No one denies that some students suffered terrible abuse in the residential schools. But not everyone believes the consequences of the schools were negative for everybody, or that compensation is appropriate. According to former residential school teacher Bernice Logan,

*We [residential school workers] don't feel the church did anything wrong by taking these children and educating them. These schools were partly orphanages. Children with terrible home lives and children whose parents wanted them to come went to the schools.*

— **Bernice Logan, Founder, Association of Former Indian Residential School Workers, *Anglican Journal*, April 2003.**

Some observers have pointed out that the education received by Aboriginal children at the schools has been at least partially responsible for the emergence of a newly powerful, well-educated leadership in the Aboriginal community:

*Now Indians\* are organized, politicized, and led by people who understand the relationship between the Native population and the government. These leaders appreciate the need of the Aboriginal peoples to acquire means to control their own lives. Ironically, it was the residential school, which was designed to be the benign exterminator of Indian identity, that indirectly played a role in its perpetuation and revitalization.*

— **J.R. Miller, "The Irony of Residential Schooling," *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, Vol. 14, 1987.**

Here is the point of view of a former student:

*It was good teaching for survival in society. We learned reading, writing, history, science, as well as how to operate machinery and farm chores. I really appreciated being able to learn all that.*

— **Rufus Goodstriker, former residential school student, *Alberta Report*, 1998, [http://www.taxpayer.com/main/news.php?news\\_id=2275](http://www.taxpayer.com/main/news.php?news_id=2275).**

\*Today, the term "First Nations" is preferable when referring to all First Nations people generally. Using a people's own name for themselves in their own language is preferable when referring to a particular nation.

- 1 Why do you suppose positive stories about residential schools get less media coverage than negative ones?
- 2 How do you think Flora Merrick would respond to these arguments about the residential schools?
- 3 Consider the perspective or point of view reflected in each of the statements above. In what ways are they similar? How do they differ?
- 4 Do you think Rufus Goodstriker and J.R. Miller would wholeheartedly support Bernice Logan's statement? Why or why not?

## Use Six Hats Thinking

In the following pages we will look at finding ways to address the social legacies of residential schools. It will require that we look at the problem from several angles, and think creatively. Dr. Edward de Bono, a leading authority in creative thinking, has developed a thinking framework based on the symbolic wearing of six “hats.” The six hats represent six types of thinking. Putting on a hat of a particular colour means purposefully guiding your thinking about a topic or issue in a particular way, and sometimes adopting a point of view on a topic or issue that is not necessarily your own. Use the six-step process below to consider creative ways to assess the legacy of residential schools in Canadian society.

**Step** Put on the “White Hat”

**1**

This hat means group members are thinking about facts, figures, and information needs and gaps. Each participant presents the facts of the case that he or she has collected.



**Step** Put on the “Green Hat”

**2**

The green hat is the hat of creativity, alternatives, proposals, what is interesting, and changes. As a group, imagine and suggest how the situation could be handled.



**Step** Put on the “Yellow Hat”

**3**

Wearing the yellow hat means thinking positively about how a suggestion will work and why it will offer benefits. It can be used to find something of value in what has already happened or to predict the positive results of some proposed action.



**Step** Put on the “Black Hat”

**4**

This is the hat of judgment. The black hat is used to point out why a suggestion does not fit the facts or the historical experience. The black hat must always be logical, and focus on the disadvantages and drawbacks to alternative proposals.



**Step** Put on the “Red Hat”

**5**

Putting on the red hat gives permission to a thinker to put forward his or her feelings, intuitions, and emotions about the subject. Each group participant explains his or her “gut reaction” to the proposals that have been put forward.







Figure 9-7 ▲

Which of the hats described on these Skill Path pages do you wear most often?

**Step** Put on the “Blue Hat”

**6**

Wearing the blue hat encourages the group to think about its own thinking process. You look not at the subject itself, but at the thinking about the subject. You might, for example, review the notes your note-taker has compiled and discuss how successfully you worked as a group. Wearing the blue hat may guide you to put on the green hat again, to refine your suggestion or proposal.

**Step** Practise Your Skill!

**7**

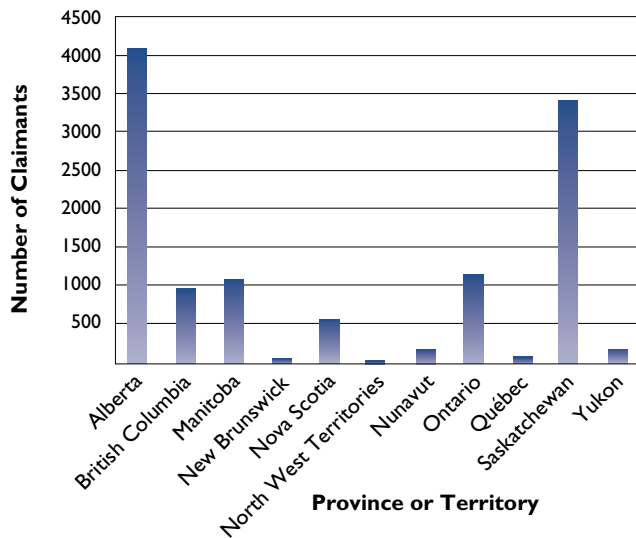
- 1 Apply It.** As you will read on the following pages, part of the agreement reached between First Nations and the government involves a fund to be used for projects aimed at preserving the legacy of the residential schools. Working in groups, use the six hats thinking approach to come up with new and interesting ways to use this money. Your aim is to educate the public and ensure that we learn from the residential school experience. Spend at least five minutes on each type of thinking. Select a group member to present the highlights of your six discussions to the class. What ideas did you come up with?
- 2 Discuss It.** Is it a good idea to preserve the memory of what went on in the residential schools? Or would it be better to forget about them and move on? Discuss with your group.
- 3 Remember It.** De Bono’s “six hats” process does not require that you be part of a group to do some creative thinking about a problem. Try wearing some or all of the different hats the next time you are asked to devise an informed opinion on an issue.

## The Government Response to the Legacies of Residential Schools

In 1998, Minister of Indian Affairs Jane Stewart issued an apology on behalf of the Canadian government to the former students of residential schools. She said, in part:

*Attitudes of racial and cultural superiority led to a suppression of Aboriginal culture and values. As a country, we are burdened by past actions that resulted in weakening the identity of Aboriginal peoples, suppressing their languages and cultures, and outlawing spiritual practices. We must recognize the impact of these actions on the once self-sustaining nations that were **disaggregated** [divided into parts], disrupted, limited or even destroyed by the dispossession of traditional territory, by the relocation of Aboriginal people, and by some provisions of the Indian Act.*

**Indian Residential School Claimants  
(11 715 as of March 31, 2003)**



(You can go to the *Perspectives on Globalization* website for a link to a site containing the full text of the government statement.) Following the apology, it was announced that an Aboriginal Healing Foundation would be set up to manage \$245 million in funding for counselling and other programs for former students.

In June 2001, the federal government set up a new department to deal with consequences of residential schools. This new department was to help speed up the process of settling the lawsuits that former students had launched against the government and churches. The need to get these claims settled was urgent because many of the claimants were elderly and ill. A law firm that represented 5400 claimants reported that of those, 121 had passed away while awaiting compensation.

In November 2005, an agreement in principle was reached by the Assembly of First Nations and the federal government. Highlights included the following:

- improved compensation process for victims of sexual and physical abuse
- \$10 000 lump-sum “common experience” payment for all former students for the loss of language, culture, and family life
- \$60 million to set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which would allow those involved to tell their stories
- five years’ additional funding for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation

Approximately 86 000 former students are eligible for the compensation package; by accepting it, they will not give up their right to seek **redress** (the righting of past wrongs) for physical and sexual abuse they may have suffered. However, the agreement does release the government and churches from all other claims relating to the residential schools.

**Figure 9-8**

Indian residential school claimants as of March 31, 2003. By 2003, the number of claims against the four churches that ran the schools and the federal government, which oversaw them, had ballooned to almost 12 000. The number of claims threatened to overwhelm the legal system and led some church parishes to declare bankruptcy. Is this a reasonable burden for individual churches to bear?

### READING STRATEGY

Before concluding from this graph that Alberta residential schools were worse than those in other places, ask, **Did Alberta have more residential schools than other provinces? A quick look back at the map in Figure 9-2 shows that it did. What other questions might you ask about these statistics?**



**Figure 9-9**

Phanuelie Palluq performs a traditional Inuit Drum Dance in Ottawa on January 8, 1998. The dance was part of a response to the federal government’s apology for its assimilation policies, as expressed in residential schools. Other responses included a criticism that the amount of compensation was not enough.

## Explore the Issues

- 1 **Make Connections.** Discuss with a partner how the residential school experience could affect one of the following:
  - a) Aboriginal languages
  - b) parenting skills among former students
  - c) traditional skills and community values in Aboriginal communities
  - d) teen suicide rates in Aboriginal communities
- 2 **Revisit Your Skills.** Look for common ground. With a partner, discuss the points of view expressed by former residential school teacher Bernice Logan, who believes she acted in good faith, and former student Flora Merrick, who feels she was victimized by the system. Use some or all of the “six hats thinking” approach to find common ground between the two positions. **SKILLS**
- 3 **Plead Your Case.** The United Nations adopted Resolution 260 on December 9, 1948. This resolution was called the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Article 2 of the Convention states that: ...**genocide** means any of the following acts

*committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:*

- *Killing members of the group;*
  - *Causing serious bodily harm or mental harm to members of the group;*
  - *Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;*
  - *Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;*
  - *Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.*
- a) One opinion holds that residential schools were part of an attempt to commit genocide. What parts of the United Nations’ definition of genocide might be cited as justification for making this claim?
  - b) What do you think of this claim? Is it reasonable? Write and present a speech to convince people that the charge of attempted genocide against the federal government is, or is not, justified.

## Historical Imperialism and Civil Strife

### Question for Inquiry

- **How could historical imperialism affect the long-term stability of a region or country?**

What can you do when you feel you are not being treated fairly? What options do you have? In a democratic society such as ours, you can use the legal system to fight for what you believe are your rights. You can organize a protest, write letters, contact the media, and lobby your Member of Parliament. All of these avenues of redress are the product of our democratic system of government. They have helped make Canada one of the most peaceful countries in the world.

What can you do, though, when you feel the system has failed you? If a group in society feels that its rights are not being protected by democratic institutions such as the legal system, members of the

group may feel they have no option but to take matters into their own hands. The result may be civil strife, violence, and confrontation. In this section, you will have an opportunity to examine two such situations.

## The Oka Crisis

In March 1990, armed members of the Mohawk First Nation (historically known as the Kanien'kehaka at Kanesatake) barricaded a road and occupied an area of land near the town of Oka, Québec. They were protesting plans to build a golf course on the land, which they claimed was once a burial ground and contained a sacred grove of pine trees planted by their ancestors.

The plans for the golf course expansion were made without consulting the Mohawk. The land in question was part of a larger piece of land claimed by the Mohawk since 1717. Their claim had been turned down by the federal Office of Native Claims in 1986 on technical grounds, but the Mohawk still maintained it was theirs by right.

The mayor of Oka called in the police, and on July 11 a SWAT team launched tear gas and concussion grenades to break up the barricades. In the chaos that ensued, Corporal Marcel Lemay of the Sûreté du Québec police force was shot and killed.

In the days and weeks that followed, Aboriginal groups from across North America joined the Mohawk on the barricades. Mohawk at the nearby Kahnawake reserve blockaded the Mercier Bridge between the Island of Montréal and the South Shore suburbs, causing enormous traffic jams. The RCMP were brought in but could not control the situation. There were other acts of solidarity that took place across Canada. For example, in Cold Lake, Alberta, a wooden bridge leading to the Canadian Forces Base was burned by a member of Cold Lake First Nations.

On August 14, the premier of Québec, Robert Bourassa, invoked the National Defence Act, which allowed him to deploy the military for the purpose of maintaining law and order. Troops of the Royal 22nd Regiment (the Van Doos) arrived within a week. Nine days later, the Mohawk blockading the Mercier Bridge negotiated a settlement.

## Fast Facts

The Mohawk case for ownership of the land is based on the fact that they have been living on it since before first contact with Europeans. The land was granted to the Roman Catholic Sulpician order in 1718 by the King of France for use as a mission to the Haudenosaunee people. However, the Mohawk claim they never gave up their title to it.

Figure 9-10

The area in Québec affected by the Oka crisis.



Source: CBC Archives, accessed at [http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-71-99-523/conflict\\_war/oka/clip4](http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-71-99-523/conflict_war/oka/clip4).





**Figure 9-11**

This famous photograph came to symbolize the tensions between Aboriginal protesters and the government. What might Private Cloutier and Brad Larocque have been feeling?

## Ideas and Opinions

“ We lived through Oka, we lived through Ipperwash, we lived through Burnt Church, and we’re here to stay. We’re not going to go away. We’re going to continue to push the government for our issues. ... I think there are some people that are willing to take drastic measures. If you’ve got nothing, you’ve got nothing to lose. You’ve got no job, your land is taken away, you’ve got no future ... I think the reaction will depend on the federal government.”

—**Matthew Coon Come, Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, quoted in Sue Bailey, “Aboriginals Will Risk Another Oka for Real Input on Governance, Says Top Chief” (CP); <http://knews.knet.ca>**

What do you think Matthew Coon Come meant by “drastic measures”? What could be done by citizens to avoid a situation where some feel “drastic measures” are necessary?

The Mohawk of Kanesatake held out for almost a month longer, but by September 26 they too had had enough. The group destroyed their weapons, ceremonially burned tobacco, and walked out of the pines to the reserve. Many of the warriors were arrested, but none was ever convicted.

## The Aftermath

- The golf course expansion was cancelled. The federal government has since purchased several parcels of land for Mohawk use. However, the original land claim dispute has never been resolved.
- After the crisis, the International Federation of Human Rights criticized the methods used by the Sûreté du Québec and the Canadian Forces.
- Amnesty International condemned Canada for its alleged abuse of Mohawk who were arrested and added Canada to its list of human rights violators.
- Some observers claim that the standoff marked a turning point in the treatment of Aboriginal land claims. The images of Canadian soldiers exchanging gunfire with a small band of Aboriginal people shocked many Canadians and increased public sympathy for resolving Aboriginal land claims.
- In June 1991, the government put into effect the **First Nations Policing Policy**, which sought to improve the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and police by promoting safe and secure communities and providing First Nations peoples across Canada with professional, effective, culturally appropriate police services that are accountable to the communities they serve.
- One year after Oka, partly in response to the crisis, the federal government established the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples to look at the concerns of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. You read about the findings of this commission in Chapter 8.
- Other violent protests involving First Nations later took place at Ipperwash, Ontario (1995), Burnt Church, New Brunswick (2000), and Caledonia, Ontario (2006).

Follow the links at the *Perspectives on Globalization* website to find out more about the Oka crisis and its aftermath.

In some countries, imperialism has left a legacy of violence that reaches even to the highest levels of government. You can read about one of these countries in the Investigation that follows.



## Civil Strife in the Democratic Republic of Congo

## INVESTIGATION

**Something to Think About:** How can legacies of imperialism affect the nature and stability of a country's government?

**An Example:** The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a Central African state that was once a colony of Belgium. The DRC is rich in many resources, including gold, copper, diamonds, and cobalt. Yet, it is also one of the poorest countries on the planet. How can this be? Part of the answer lies in the colonial history of the country.

### The Congo Free State

In 1885, King Leopold II of Belgium acquired the region, which he called the Congo Free State, as his personal possession. Under his rule, the Congolese people were subjected to a reign of terror that led to the death of between three and 22 million Congolese people. Leopold enslaved the Congolese and forced them to extract rubber and ivory from the region in order to add to his private fortunes. The massive Congolese death toll at the hands of King Leopold can be broken down into four categories, as shown in Figure 9-13.

#### Disease

Germs killed more Congolese people than bullets did. The biggest killers were smallpox and sleeping sickness.

#### Starvation, Exhaustion, Exposure

As news of the killings spread among the Congolese population, hundreds of thousands left their villages. Belgian soldiers took their animals and burned their homes and crops. Many of those who stayed also went hungry, because soldiers often raided their banana, manioc, fish, and meat stores.

#### Murder

If a particular area of the Congo Free State did not produce a set amount of rubber or resisted colonization, Belgian Army soldiers or "sentries" from the rubber companies would often kill everyone they could find.

#### Plummeting Birth Rate

The Belgians forced Congolese men to search for rubber in the forests and took many women hostage, which meant that fewer children were being born. Another reason for the low birth rate was that families who were so terrorized simply decided not to have children.

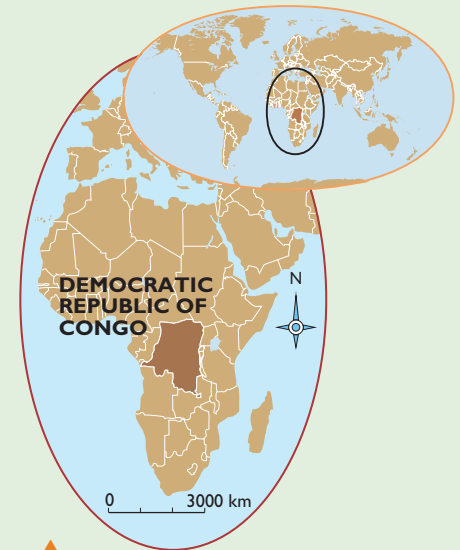


Figure 9-12

The Democratic Republic of Congo, in Central Africa

Figure 9-13

Causes of death among Congolese under King Leopold. How does King Leopold's attitude toward the Congolese people compare with other examples of colonial exploitation you have read about in previous chapters?



**Figure 9-14**

Congolese workers dig at a gold mine. The natural resources of the DRC have made it a centre of conflict as corrupt leaders and neighbouring countries try to plunder its wealth. How does this conflict and corruption affect the everyday lives of DRC citizens?

### Fast Facts

The International Rescue Committee estimates that at least 3.8 million Congolese people have been killed since the beginning of the war in 1998, mostly from disease and malnutrition.

Why do you think some observers have called the war in Congo “Africa’s World War”?

### Mobutu Sese Seko

The country was finally handed over to the Belgian government to administer in 1908, until it gained independence in 1960. Five years of unstable government and rebellions followed. Then, a military coup placed Lieutenant General Joseph Désire Mobutu in power. In the 1970s Mobutu renamed the country Zaire and decreed that all citizens must take African names. He himself became Mobutu Sese Seko.

Mobutu ruled Zaire from 1965 to 1997. He was supported during most of this time by the United States and other Western powers. During Mobutu’s years in office, it is alleged that security forces were responsible for the torture and death of thousands of civilians and members of opposition groups, while he himself ruined the country’s finances by transferring massive

amounts of resources to himself. During more than 30 years in power he amassed a personal fortune worth an estimated \$4 billion. Many experts consider Mobutu’s rule in Zaire one of the greatest examples of **kleptocracy**—a government so corrupt that no pretense of honesty remains. The government spends much of its time and energy collecting taxes from the people in order to acquire more money for the ruler. Mobutu’s policies led to an economic crisis in the 1970s, when hundreds—perhaps thousands—of citizens were executed by his security forces.

### The DRC Today

Corruption and repression continued after Mobutu was deposed. From 1998 to 2001, the eastern region of Zaire was involved in a brutal war that divided the country into three segments, each controlled by groups backed by neighbouring countries. Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda have all backed various rebel groups, while Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe supported the DRC government. Many of these countries have been accused of plundering the rich resources of the DRC.

Today, although severe human rights violations, armed conflict, and corruption remain common in many areas, DRC President Joseph Kabila has managed to negotiate a peace accord with neighbouring countries and has begun to institute democratic reforms in the country.



- 1 In your opinion, are the current problems in the DRC directly traceable to historical imperialism? Draw a political cartoon to explain your point of view.
- 2 Could a situation like this happen in Canada? Why or why not? Explain your views.
- 3 a) Using the Skill Path from Chapter 1 (pages 7–8), work in a group to brainstorm ways that the global community can play a role in pressuring or encouraging countries like Congo to deal with political instability or civil strife resulting from historical globalization. Use six hats thinking to expand and refine your ideas. As a class, put together a list of all the groups' ideas. **SKILLS**  
b) Discuss how you would feel if other countries tried to pressure Canada to address outstanding issues by these means.

## Explore the Issues

### 1 Be a Global Citizen.

- a) Go to the *Perspectives on Globalization* website for links to information about Edmund Morel. Write a paragraph summarizing Morel's connection to the situation in the Congo under King Leopold.
- b) Put yourself in Edmund Morel's shoes in 1900. The only mass medium is the newspaper, and there are no international human rights organizations to help you. As a person who respects the human condition, you must try to influence and ultimately stop the human rights abuses taking place in the Congo. Discuss in a group and come up with a plan of action to help the Congolese people. (Review the steps you learned in the Chapter 4 Skill Path (pages 71–72) on working successfully as a team for this activity.)
- c) If the Congo Free State existed in the 21st century, how could Edmund Morel use technology to help spread his message?

### 2 Write a Report.

- a) Make a timeline to show how the confrontation at Oka escalated. Then, identify at least

four points at which the confrontation could have been avoided or resolved by one side or the other.

- b) Based on your analysis, what could be done to avoid similar incidents in the future? Discuss your ideas with a partner or in a small group. Use six hats thinking to help you to come up with a consensus on what changes you think need to be made. **SKILLS**

### 3 Media Watch.

- a) In 2005, a poll of experts picked the killing in Congo as the number one “forgotten emergency” in the world—one that the global media need to do a better job of covering. Monitor newspapers, Internet news sites, or both, and collect any articles you find on the current situation in the DRC. Present a summary of your findings in the form of a radio news story or an oral report.
- b) Based on your survey of news coverage of events in Congo, would you agree that these events deserve better news coverage in the West? Write a letter to the editor, or use some other medium to express your views.



# Learning from Past Mistakes

## Question for Inquiry

- How can a people respond to legacies of historical globalization?

## Ideas and Opinions

“No special linguistic skills or artistic experience are required. Ability to walk short distances (1 to 2 miles) [2 to 3 kilometers] up and down steep hills in forest and agricultural territory and to travel in hot sun or cold rain in the back of pickup trucks for up to two hours. Sleeping and eating will be in rustic buildings in rural, Zapatista civilian centres. Basketball skills and a sense of humour are very useful; patience and resilience are required!”

—Internet advertisement,  
Schools for Chiapas,  
[http://schoolsforchiapas.org/  
Chiapas\\_Travel/Caravans.php](http://schoolsforchiapas.org/Chiapas_Travel/Caravans.php).

Why do you think some people might find this offer of a working vacation appealing?

Figure 9-15

Young foreign volunteers working in Chiapas. Could you ever see yourself travelling abroad to work for a non-governmental organization or a cause like that of the Zapatistas? What might you do?

Did some people suffer as a result of historical globalization? Most people would agree that this was the case. And some would conclude that we should reject globalization altogether as a result.

But others might suggest that we can learn from our past experiences. They might point out that it is possible to embrace globalization without inflicting the same suffering as was done in the past. Even groups that consider themselves opposed to some facets of globalization have embraced other aspects of the globalizing experience. Let's look at one region where anti-globalization forces have found ways to enlist global support for their cause, and to move away from the pattern of violent confrontation that so often characterized historical globalization in the region.

## The Zapatista Movement

Looking for a different kind of vacation? Why not join the Chiapas Coffee and Corn Harvest Delegation in Chiapas, Mexico? There are no beaches, and you won't be staying in a four-star hotel. Instead, you'll join young people from around the world helping farmers pick crops in the hot sun, then sleep in a rough bunkhouse. The cost, not including airfare, is US\$480 (about \$560 CAD). That's right—you pay *them* to let you work!



Every year, dozens of delegations of this type arrive in Chiapas, the poorest region of Mexico, to offer their services to the local people.

The international attention that Chiapas has received of late is largely the result of a campaign launched by the Zapatistas, an anti-globalization movement that has taken root in the region, and which has captured the imagination and hearts of many anti-globalization activists and marginalized groups (groups that are not part of mainstream society) around the world. Does the Zapatista approach offer hope for those who feel they have been left behind by the rapid pace of globalization? Before you decide, you will need to understand the historical conditions that gave rise to it, and the tactics used by the Zapatistas today.

## A Legacy of Neglect

Chiapas is a state in the southeastern region of Mexico. It is inhabited by some four million people, about a third of whom are descended from the Mayan people who originally inhabited Central America. Many eke out a living by farming. It is estimated that 40 per cent of the population suffers from malnutrition.

The poverty and lack of opportunity in Chiapas have their roots in the conquest of the region by the Spanish 500 years ago. The Mayan people suffered greatly in the 16th century at the hands of the Spanish explorers and their armies, who took over the fertile lowland areas for plantations and cattle ranches. The Mayan farmers were forced to grow their subsistence crops, crops that barely provided enough food for them to eat, on the rocky, much less fertile soil of the highland regions. For centuries afterwards, the Indigenous Mayan population continued to live in poverty, largely ignored by the government and the world.

	Mexico	Chiapas
Urban population	71%	40%
Literacy rate	87%	69%
Households with running water	79%	58%
Households with access to electricity	88%	67%

◀ **Figure 9-16**

What picture of life in Chiapas region do these statistics present?

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, "Anuario Estadístico de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, 1991," [http://www.augustana.ab.ca/rdx/eng/activism\\_eng3.htm](http://www.augustana.ab.ca/rdx/eng/activism_eng3.htm).

## Fast Facts

From 1994 to 2003, per capita incomes in Mexico have risen 24 per cent. At the same time, 1.3 million farm jobs have disappeared because of food imports from the United States.

Which of these statistics do you think would have the bigger effect on the Chiapas region?



Figure 9-17

Subcomandante Marcos, spokesperson for the Zapatista Army of National Liberation. Why do you think Marcos chooses to keep his face covered in this way? What does this practice remind you of?

In January 1994, Mexico signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the United States and Canada. To secure the deal, Mexico agreed to ban subsidies for Indigenous farm co-operatives. **Subsidies** are financial help given to an industry by the government. This agreement would repeal Article 17 of the Mexican Constitution, which granted Indigenous peoples the right to communal (community) ownership of the lands they had lived on for generations. The inhabitants of Chiapas had been fighting for this right for decades.

The Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) arose in response to this new wave of globalization. The Zapatistas claim to be the voice of those peoples who have been left behind by globalization. They believe that NAFTA and other forms of globalization are destroying their language, their economic and political systems, and the way people relate to each other. The slogan of the Zapatistas is “Ya Basta!” (Enough!)

## Ideas and Opinions

“ We have nothing to lose, absolutely nothing, no decent roof over our heads, no land, no work, poor health, no food, no education, no right to freely and democratically choose our leaders, no independence from foreign interests, and no justice for ourselves or our children. But we say enough is enough! We are the descendants of those who truly built this nation, we are the millions of dispossessed, and we call upon all of our brethren to join our crusade, the only option to avoid dying of starvation! ”

—Zapatista National Liberation Army,  
Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle, 1993.

What similarities do you see between this statement and that made by Matthew Coon Come about Aboriginal peoples in Canada (see page 192)?

When NAFTA came into effect in 1994, the Zapatistas declared war on the Mexican government and took over five towns in the Chiapas region. They sent out a statement explaining that NAFTA would be a “summary execution” of the Chiapas people.

## New Tactics

Soon after their declaration of war on the Mexican government in 1994, the Zapatistas made a dramatic change. They adopted a unique non-violence policy, claiming they would take no military or terrorist actions against the government. Instead of blockading the land to keep people out, the Zapatistas invited people to see for themselves the poverty and desperation in Chiapas. Using the technological tools of globalization—the Internet and satellite phones—they appealed for international support for their cause. Here is how the lead spokesperson for the



Zapatistas, known only as “Subcomandante Marcos,” describes what makes this movement different from other forms of resistance:

*What other guerrilla force has convened a national democratic movement, civic and peaceful, so that armed struggle becomes useless? What other guerrilla force asks its bases of support about what it should do before doing it? What other guerrilla force has struggled to achieve a democratic space and not taken power? What other guerrilla force has relied more on words than on bullets?*

— **Subcomandante Marcos, spokesperson for the EZLN, quoted in Naomi Klein, “The Unknown Icon,” *The Guardian*, March 3, 2001.**

The tactic seems to be working. International delegations like the one described at the beginning of this section help the Zapatistas develop their communities. At the same time, the Mexican government has given the region more aid and attention than at any time in the last 500 years. Turning a blind eye to the 30-odd towns that have now declared themselves “rebel autonomous Zapatista municipalities,” Mexican soldiers have helped to build health clinics, schools, and roads, and to distribute food. The government has also donated a 5000-hectare plot of land to the people of Chiapas and will provide loans to Chiapas farmers so that they can buy farm equipment. There are many Chiapans, though, who are still living in poverty and who are frustrated with the slow pace of change. Some of them have moved to the United States in search of better opportunities.



**Figure 9-18**

A demonstration in support of the Zapatista movement in Mexico City. What do you think accounts for the popularity of the movement in Chiapas? Globally?

## **READING STRATEGY**

This quotation uses a series of **rhetorical questions**, whose answers are obvious to the reader. Persuasive writers use rhetorical questions to convince the reader that their argument is self-evident. What do you think Marcos is trying to convince the reader of in this passage? How could you use this technique in your own writing?

## **Ideas and Opinions**

“Mateo Hernandez, whose radio programs in the Indian language of Tzotzil have made him a popular personality among Indians, said real change has been slow:

*‘We remain just as poor, maybe not as forgotten as before, but certainly just as poor’. . . . ‘Many got tired and disillusioned with Marcos’s empty rhetoric and promises.’ said Hernandez, whose radio program takes daily calls from Chiapas immigrants in the United States. [He adds:] ‘They’ve become deserters of the Zapatista army.’* ”

— **Laurence Iliff and Alfredo Corhado, “Zapatistas’ ’94 Rebellion Sparked Fight for Indians’ Rights,” *Knight-Ridder/Tribune News Service*, April 30, 2004.**

Why have some Chiapans lost patience with the Zapatista movement? What is pushing them to the United States?





## What Makes the Zapatistas Unique?

Here is how Naomi Klein, a Canadian writer and activist, described the unique approach of the Zapatistas:

*In Canada, where I'm from, Indigenous uprising is always symbolized by a blockade: a physical barrier to stop the golf course from being built on a Native burial site, to block the construction of a hydroelectric dam, or to keep an old-growth forest from being logged. The Zapatista uprising was a new way to protect land and culture: rather than locking out the world, the Zapatistas flung open the doors and invited the world inside. Chiapas was transformed, despite its poverty, despite being under constant military siege, into a global gathering place for activists, intellectuals, and Indigenous groups. . .*

*When the uprising began, the government attempted to play down the incident as a "local" problem, an ethnic dispute easily contained. The strategic victory of the Zapatistas was to change the terms: to insist that what was going on in Chiapas could not be written off as a narrow "ethnic" struggle, and that it was universal.*

—Naomi Klein, "The Unknown Icon,"  
*The Guardian*, March 3, 2001.

- 1 Why does Klein say that the situation in Chiapas is a "universal" struggle?
- 2 Is this a model that other groups could or should use to respond to globalization when it threatens their way of life or security?

### Explore the Issues

- 1 **Present a Conversation.** Imagine a conversation between a Mohawk from Kanesatake and a spokesperson for the Zapatista movement about how to respond to globalizing forces today, and what we might learn from our experiences in the past. What might these two individuals have in common? What might they disagree about? Present your conversation as a dialogue or a news report based on the results of the meeting.
  - how those mistakes can be avoided today
  - the Zapatista response to globalization.
- 2 **Consider Other Perspectives.** The Zapatistas have essentially set up their own government within parts of Chiapas region. This is a direct challenge to the authority of the Mexican government.

Write a letter to the Zapatista leadership from a representative of the Mexican government, in which you explain your government's perspective on

  - the mistakes that were made by globalizing powers in the past
- 3 **Compare Global Movements.** Work with a partner or small group to research the Landless Peasants' Movement of Brazil (also called the Landless Worker's Movement) and the Piquetero movement in Argentina. For each movement, prepare a report that answers the following questions:
  - What specific problem is the group trying to address?
  - How is this problem rooted in historical globalization?
  - What methods are the people using to respond to these pressures?
  - What is the group's attitude toward contemporary globalization?
  - How are these movements affecting the societies in which they have arisen?

## Reflect and Analyze

In this chapter, you explored social problems that have their roots in past policies toward First Nations peoples. You saw how ignoring unresolved conflicts can lead to civil strife. These examples should help you respond to the Chapter Issue: *To what extent are contemporary societies affected by historical imperialism?*

With all you learned in the other chapters in this part, you can also respond to the Main Issue for Part 2: *To what extent should contemporary society respond to the legacies of historical globalization?*

### Recognize Relationships between Content and Issues

- 1 Some people today believe that because the United States government supported slavery from 1776 to 1865, the government should compensate descendants of slaves for unpaid wages. Others believe that Americans who weren't in America at the time or who are descended from people who never owned slaves should not have to pay the bill (through taxpayer dollars) for this historical injustice.


Divide the class into two groups. The first group should try to convince an impartial jury (made up of parents, students with spares, or teachers) that the United States government should compensate descendants of slaves. Both sides should concentrate on the general principles involved.

- 2 You own a small business in Calgary that produces cellphones using the mineral coltan from the DRC. You find out that the profits from the sale of coltan are helping finance the war there. If you buy your coltan elsewhere at a higher price, your company will not be able to compete and

you will be forced to lay off some of your 38 workers in Calgary. What do you do? (Preview the Chapter 14 Skill Path (pages 289–290), Make a Good Decision in Seven Steps, before you try this exercise.)

- 3 a) Now examine the news from a newspaper or the Internet to find a moral and ethical reasoning dilemma like the one in Activity 2, above. Exchange your dilemma with another student and discuss your responses to each situation.  
b) Could you use the six hats approach to help find a response to these dilemmas? Why or why not? Do you find this approach helpful? Explain. **SKILLS**

### Focus on Research and Inquiry

- 4 a) Conduct an inquiry into the confrontations between First Nations and police at either Ipperwash, Ontario in 1995 or Burnt Church, New Brunswick in 2000. Refer to the Inquiry Model located on the inside front cover of this text to guide your research. You can adapt this process as you see fit. Use the Web links at the *Perspectives on Globalization*  website to begin your research.  
b) Write a case study that includes the historical background of the events leading up to the confrontation, an explanation of the main points in the dispute, and a summary of the outcome or consequences of the incident.  
c) Conclude with a personal opinion response that outlines whether or not you believe the government (federal, provincial, or both) has responded to these conflicts appropriately.

