

**THE AMBIGUITY OF ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION
FOR
CANADA**

**An ELCIC Response
To the Lutheran World Federation Study
“Engaging Globalization as a Communion”**

March 2002

This paper has been prepared by the Rev. Dr. David Pfrimmer of the Lutheran Office for Public Policy of the ELCIC. It is the result of consultations involving the ELCIC Bishops, regional synod governing councils and committees, individuals from across the ELCIC as well as discussions with ecumenical and social partners. This paper tries to faithfully reflect the convergence of views that were expressed in the consultation. Not everyone will agree with everything that has been included because not everyone agreed in the consultation. With thanks to those who made this process possible, it is hoped that those who contributed and those who read this response will be provoked to discuss further the implications of globalization, its impact on people and communities, and most importantly the implications for the witness of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Introduction

Canada is a nation that might well be described as a consequence of globalizing forces of colonial expansionism. The original inhabitants of this land welcomed Europeans. Canada's modern beginnings were very much that of a global "village" bringing together peoples from Aboriginal, Anglophone, and Francophone cultures. In 1867, the agreement among the Anglophone (Upper Canada and the Maritimes) and Francophone (Quebec) communities to a Confederation of Provinces led to the creation of the Dominion of Canada. The dominance of these two cultures with the continual conflict and creative tension between them, have certainly been a major dynamic in the drama that is Canada. More recently, the cultural voices of aboriginal peoples and immigrant communities have been added to this unfolding drama that has made Canada a multicultural national example – fragile to be sure – of the emerging new global community.

Canada's unique identity – particularly in comparison to its neighbour to the south – has been its sense of global citizenship, its acceptance of the multicultural identity of its citizens, and its persistent investment – particularly through public institutions – in the social, political, cultural and economic infrastructure to maintain its sense of nationhood. During most of the 1990s, Canada has been ranked by the United Nations Development Program as a country with the highest quality of life. As a diverse community of 30 million people spread over close to 10 million square kilometres of geography, Canadians have needed to be quite intentional and assertive in preserving their national community against European paternalism and U.S. assimilation. This has meant that Canadians historically have been particularly attuned to the advantages and the adverse impacts of a wider global currents and dynamics.

Canada's colonial history also has a harmful and objectionable legacy. In creating Canada, Aboriginal peoples were not included in the nation building arrangement. Some First Nations had treaties with the Crown that resulted de facto in a relationship with the new Dominion. Today there remain 480 outstanding land claims to be settled. Canada does not have an enviable record when it comes to its legacy of treatment of aboriginal peoples. Government policies have consistently taken away lands from First Nations, sought to "extinguish" their rights, and then endeavoured to assimilate aboriginal communities into the dominant European culture that has come to be Canada.¹ The United Nations Human Development Index reports that the majority of Canadians enjoy the highest quality of life of any nation in the world. By the same measure, social conditions facing aboriginal communities within Canada are in sixty-third place, making Canada's native peoples among the poorest nations in the world.² Aboriginal communities face suicide rates that are six times those of non-aboriginal communities, infant

¹ The government would not use the term "extinguishment." Rather they include the words "cede, release, and surrender forever."

² Assembly of First Nations, Opening Remarks by former National Chief Phil Fontaine (Confederacy of Nations Assembly, 9 December 1999).

mortality is three times the Canadian average, tuberculosis is twenty-five times the Canadian average and while only three percent of the population, aboriginal people make up fourteen percent of those in prison. Former Grand Chief Ovid Mercredi of the Assembly of First Nations has said, “If you want to know the future globalization offers, look at native people. We have experienced it already.”³ There are many issues Canadians need to confront and resolve in their relationship with aboriginal peoples. In doing so, there may emerge some important directions for dealing with the broader reality of globalization both in Canada and internationally.

Globalization

The term “globalization” arrived innocently enough in the Canadian public vocabulary in the early 1980s as the description of the many ways in which the world was becoming more interconnected and interrelated, particularly in terms of economic activity. Globalization in this broad and abstract sense and in its many expressions – cultural, economic, political, social, and spiritual – appeals to the cosmopolitan and global internationalism of Canadians.

Canadians welcomed the global cultural connections. With the exception of First Nations, Canada is an immigrant nation. In the 1970s and onward, Canadian’s humanitarian compassion meant they welcomed many refugees fleeing persecution. This included the “Boat People” from Southeast Asia and those fleeing oppressive regimes in Latin America and Africa. This in turn enriched the multi-culturalism which had become official government policy in 1987.

Canadians like to travel. As travel was made more accessible and affordable, many Canadians were able to experience the social dimensions of different cultures and people. The exchange of knowledge and ideas opened Canada to the world and in turn changed the nature of the country and its’ people. Many Canadians volunteered to live and work in other countries. They shared their ideas and were not hesitant to bring back many of the insights of other cultures. This exchange has made Canada a nation open and tolerant of others.

Box 1: Public Moments in the Economic Globalization Debate in Canada

1988 Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) implemented

1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) implemented

1995 Canada Health and Social Transfer implemented by Federal Government

1998 Multi-lateral Agreement on Investment exposed

2001 Quebec City discussions begin on a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA).

³ The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national organization of chiefs from First Nations across the country. This remark was made at the United Church of Canada Moderator’s Roundtable on the Economy in Ottawa in the fall of 2000.

Canadians have welcomed the benefits of technology which helped link the country together. Canada is one of the most “wired” countries in the world. Canadians tend to embrace technology. Per capita, they use more automatic banking services such as “debit cards” and more households (70%) have connections to the internet than many other nations including the United States. Given Canada’s vast geography, this has certainly improved the ability of Canadians to communicate with each other and the world. New technologies have also brought benefits in other areas such as in education and health care. The exchange of knowledge has opened up new possibilities in many fields.

Canada has historically been a trading nation. This trend has greatly accelerated in recent years. Between 1990 and 1999 exports have grown from 26 percent to 44 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and imports from 26 percent to 41 percent.⁴ Eighty five (85) percent of Canadian exports – over \$1 billion per day and over \$500 billion annually – flow to U.S. markets.⁵ Canada’s average trade surplus during the 1990s grew to CDN\$19.7 billion, up from the CDN\$9.4 billion average over the period of the 1980s. The economic aspect of globalization has reinforced the trade related historical roots of Canada’s wealth.

With it too, there were political dimensions of globalization. The emergence of democratic governments in Eastern Europe and falling of military regimes in Latin America and other countries offered a sense of hope. From the first use of “peace-keeping” military forces in the Suez crisis, to its leadership in the creation of a new international criminal court, Canadians recognized the need to create and support international institutions as vital and necessary to building a global community.

So too there is a spiritual dimension to globalization, as the historic faiths began to encounter each other in new and more intimate ways. Within the church too, this also meant the encounter and collaboration between Christians from North and South. The testimony of Christians often in situations of suffering and oppression, has enriched the church’s understanding of the faith. “World music” has enlivened worship of Christians in the North. The shared partnership in development and justice work has been important to renewing the church through mission.

Canada is a nation that has been born of a global encounter with other people, cultures, and nations. Certainly in the conversations with the ELCIC about globalization, many members of the ELCIC are mindful of the benefits that have come as a result of this global engagement. In some ways, it makes Canadians more nuanced in assessing the benefits and costs of

⁴ Making New Technologies Work for Human Development, Human Development Report 2001 (Oxford University Press, New York, New York, 2001) p. 186.

⁵ “New Report Shows that NAFTA Has Harmed Workers in All Three Countries,” Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Ottawa, April 11, 2001.

globalization. John Dillon, a researcher on economic issues with the ecumenical organization Kairos, captured this Canadian perspective when he said, “The issue is not whether we are experiencing too little or too much globalization, but rather whether we are experiencing the wrong or the right kind of globalization.”⁶

The Paradox of Economic Globalization

There has been a temptation to make “globalization” an omnibus term for anything that seemingly draws individuals pursuing their self-interest, into a one-world community with a loosely defined common destiny. This one-world vision in some ways resonates with the hope of the Christians for a common human community. However, in other ways, this more broad and abstract notion of globalization complicated the discussions for quite a number of the participants. They argued that these matters were very complex and therefore too difficult – even impossible – to address. As a result, some suggested the LWF paper was “too negative” and needed to identify more of the “positive aspects of globalization” and its benefits.

In trying to understand this reaction, Bishop Richard Smith (MNO Synod) made the observation that most in the ELCIC perceive themselves as benefiting from globalization. He went on to say,

“If you are benefiting and then are forced to ask questions, it compels us to ask questions about our faith life and stewardship. Yet, we have not developed the ‘social analysis’ skills. When you are on the losing end (of globalization), you are drawn to ask ‘why?’ If you are benefiting, you just don’t ask why.”

For these participants, they had some difficulty in understanding the paradoxes of globalization and thereby identifying the moral and ethical questions that needed further discussion.

Still there was another group in these discussions, who did have more direct experiences and who did identify very specific issues that were symptomatic of the impact of globalization on people and communities. For them “globalization” was defined more precisely in terms of “economic globalization.” The believed economic globalization promoted the policies of the “Washington Consensus” which emphasized (1) trade liberalization, (2) deregulation, (3) privatization of public assets, (4) the demand for balanced budgets by governments, (5) the priority on low inflation, and (6) the unfettered flow of capital across national borders. For these people, many of whom were dealing directly with the impact on people and communities, they were able to focus on specific issues and ensuing ethical questions. They saw the consequences of these policies and the contradiction of globalization that promised prosperity and increased

⁶ John Dillon is a researcher and policy analyst for Kairos - Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives. He has provided the Canadian churches with analysis of international economic justice issues, international financial institutions, and more recently debts and trade related issues. He made this comments to the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Canada on July 6, 2001 in Waterloo, Ontario.

human well-being on the one hand but in reality had led to growing poverty, increased un- and underemployment, undermined food security, threatened the environment, restricted access to education and health care, and in general led to greater social exclusion.

For this second group, there were inherent paradoxes in the outcome of these policies. Their starting point – which seemed to stimulate reflection and drew into the conversation even those mentioned above who had trouble – was on the impact on people and communities. There were at least four areas of impact that they felt need to be addressed; (1) poverty and social exclusion (the social paradox), (2) work and sustainable livelihoods (the economic paradox), (3) preserving the environment (the ecological paradox), and (4) the threats to democracy and citizen participation in decisions that affect them (the political paradox).

The Impact on Canada of Economic Globalization

Overall, there was a sense that our societies in Canada and in the world are out of balance, that the insatiable drive for unfettered growth and profits by large corporations is too dominant while the important decisions affecting our relationships to each other, whether across the street or around the world, are less impacted by the values of social and ecological justice. Lewis Mumford expressed this feeling when he observed that the seven deadly sins have become the seven cardinal virtues of our economy.⁷ There was also a sense that economic globalization was over estimated and not able to fulfill the inflated promises of its promoters.

Volumes have been written about the impact of economic globalization on Canada. The examples too numerous to mention in this short account. The following are some of the contradictions or paradoxes that give rise to this feeling. They also point to some of the serious moral and ethic questions that many in the consultations felt needed to be addressed.

Economic Paradox

Advocates of globalization claim liberating markets will increase prosperity and will provide a more secure future for Canada. Yet many in this consultation pointed to the growing gap between rich and poor in the country and in the world as evidence of the economic paradox. There are at least five aspects to this growing gap; the employment gap, the value gap, the income gap, the public goods gap, and the wealth gap.⁸

Since the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives estimates a net loss of 276,000 jobs in Canada by 1997.⁹ This has

⁷ Lewis Mumford, The Conditions of Man (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York: 1944)

⁸ Armine Yalnizyan, The Growing Gap. A report on the growing inequality between rich and poor in Canada (The Centre for Social Justice in Canada, Toronto: 1998) p.80.

⁹ See NAFTA AT Seven, Economic Policy Institute <www.policyalternatives.ca>

been accompanied by reduced access to employment or enough employment leading to the **employment gap**. Professor Michael Bradfield of Dalhousie University pointed out in the consultation that the theory that increased trade leads to increased well-being assumes only if you have no unemployment. Yet the official unemployment rate in Canada has steadily increased from 2.7 percent in the 1940s, 4.2 percent in the 1950s to 9.6 percent during the 1990s. While two-thirds of the labour force worked full-time (35-40 hours per week) a generation ago, now only about half the workforce has full time work. This led some to ask, “Who will hire me?” In smaller communities away from the more urban centres, many were asking “Who will hire me *here*?”

There is also a **value gap** as wage/salary levels have been eroded. Consultation participants reported many people are not earning a living wage. Many reported that their salaries and income had not kept pace with the costs of living. The average family with children under 18, had \$4000 less in 1996 than they did in 1989.¹⁰ Some made the observation that their adult children and those of their friends, were often forced to either stay at home longer or move home because they could not afford to live on what they earned.

Canadian inequality is characterized by also by an **income gap**. Real disposable income in Canada fell on average by 3.3 percent between 1989 and 1999.¹¹ This has had real implications on families. Three themes are emerging. First a growing number of families have no income earners. In 1980, one in ten “husband-wife” families had no income earner which rose to one in six by 1995.¹² Brice Balmer of the House of Friendship in Kitchener-Waterloo, reports that now 10 percent of those coming for food from food banks have no source of income at all. Second, most dual income households have seen declining incomes. Families are surviving because additional family members have entered the work force. For example, two thirds of mothers with children under three are working compared to one-third a generation ago.¹³ The “middle class” in Canada is shrinking from 60 percent in 1973 to only 44 percent of families in 1996.¹⁴ Yet ironically, dual income households at the upper end of the spectrum are commanding more from the market with less hours of work.

¹⁰ Yalnizyan, p.45

¹¹ Wayne Ellwood, The No-Nonsense Guide to Globalization, (Between the Lines Press, Toronto; 2001) p. 100.

¹² Yalnizyan, p. 40.

¹³ Yalnizyan, p. 36ff.

¹⁴ See Armine Yalnizyan, The Growing Gap. A report on the growing inequality between rich and poor in Canada. In 1973, 60% of families with dependent children under 18 earned between \$24,500 and \$65,000 (in 1996 dollars). By 1996, that middle class shrunk: only 44% of families with dependent children made between \$24,500 and \$65,000. Most of that change happened in the very middle. Those earning the equivalent of between \$37,600 and \$56,000 in 1973 accounted for 40% of the population. A generation later, only 27% found themselves in the middle.

Cutbacks to government programs and downloading of some services to municipalities, mean that there is a **public goods gap**. The Canadian government has cut public spending from 16 percent to 11 percent of GDP. Similarly, provincial governments have engaged in dramatic program spending cuts, mainly to programs that affect vulnerable populations. This coupled with relentless tax cuts has meant that people have to pay for more and more of what were formerly public services. In 1995 in Ontario for example, the Conservative government cut provincial income taxes 30 percent, half of which went to the top 20 percent of the population and added a whopping \$30 billion to the provincial debt. British Columbia and other provinces and the federal government have undertaken similar cuts. This has meant less money for public investment in infrastructure and social programs. This means more “user fees” for high school students, more calls for selling off public assets, increasing university tuition (50% increases in some jurisdictions), privatizing highways, and suggestions of “co-payments” for health care. Tax cuts by provincial governments in more affluent provinces have further reduced the funds – made through federal government equalization payments – to poorer provinces exacerbating cuts to programs and services there. People now have to pay more and more for services that they once paid for collectively through the tax system which has resulted in a disproportionate burden falling on lower and middle income households.

Finally, there is a **wealth gap**, where there has been a greater concentration of wealth. Statistics Canada figures have shown that net worth of the top 20 percent of households has gone up by 39 percent while the lowest 20 percent saw their net worth drop by \$600.00.¹⁵

The claim is that “all boats will rise” on the wave of prosperity brought by globalization. But many in this consultation quietly admitted that they felt that “only the yachts are rising.” While the structural adjustment programs have been imposed upon poorer countries by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, quite a number of participants felt political leaders have structurally adjusted the Canadian economy on their own.

Political Paradox

Advocates argue that economic globalization has led to the spread of democracy. But the paradox is that many Canadians are feeling more cynical about politicians, seriously questioning whose interests they serve, and feel less able to influence decisions. There is a crisis of trust and confidence in our “body politic.” Many feel frustrated and powerless in influencing the decisions being made. It seems almost futile to them to participate in a political system that increasingly reflects the priorities of the private sector and is supported by corporate donations. The last federal election saw the levels of citizen participation fall from 75% in the previous election to 63% and some commentators have suggested that more realistically it was 50%.

¹⁵ Steve Kerstetter, “BC's Bountiful Crop of Millionaires,” <<http://www.policyalternatives.ca>>

Many Canadians worry that not only do the interests of corporate profits take priority over the interests of citizens, corporations want more rights than citizens themselves, writing the laws in their interest for the politicians to enact. (See Box 4 Investor State Mechanisms) One example was given in Nova Scotia. With a completion of a pipeline in 1999, the Sable Offshore Energy Project is expected to deliver natural gas to the Northeast United States.¹⁶ In the South Shore community where the pipeline comes ashore, local inhabitants still pay high costs to heat their homes and ironically natural gas will not be available to them for some time if at all. And when the reserves run out in twenty years, they ask “What will be left for the next generation?”

On a national scale this is also reflected in the national debate on health care. The health care system in Canada has taken a different road from that in the United States since World War II. In 1959 the federal government appointed Chief Justice Emmett M. Hall to chair a Royal Commission on Health Services which recommended a national plan of universal publicly administered health insurance that was accessible to all citizens. The government passed legislation that created Canada’s health care system in December of 1966 and it went into effect on July 1, 1968.

Canada’s public system of health care not only provides a vital service but it has come to be a defining mark of Canada itself. In addition it has also been shown to be a more efficient way of delivering health care. Canada spends approximately 9.5 percent of GDP to provide health care for all its citizens in comparison to the United States which spends close to 14 percent and leaves 400,000 million uninsured and an equal number under-insured. It enjoys strong public support (80-90 percent of public) and no politician would dare to try and change this system.

Box 2 - The Disappearance of Family Farms – Choosing Trade

Canadian farmers have found themselves caught in a trade tug-of-war between the U.S. and European agricultural subsidies that has made it hard for small family type farms to survive. Dr. Cam Harder points out that this has been a deliberate policy of the government and financial institutions.

“In its 1969 paper “Agriculture in the Seventies” the Canadian government said that because of surplus agricultural production and the fact that a third of the farmers in Canada were living below the poverty line, it was going to ‘wage war on farm poverty’ by removing two-thirds of Canada’s farmers (presumably the poorest) by 1990. They have almost succeeded. In 1969, nine percent of the Canadian population lived on the farm; by 1991 it was down to 3.2 percent . . . As marketing boards and tariff restrictions are phased out over the next five years, dairy and poultry farmers particularly will lose the money they put into purchasing quotas and they will be faced with much reduced prices as our markets are opened to cheaper U.S. milk and chicken.”

Dr. Cam Harder, “The Shaming of Canada’s Farmers: A Christian Response” (Consensus, A Canadian Lutheran Journal of Theology, Vol 21. No.2, 1995 pp. 68-69)

¹⁶ Energy and Information Administration, Natural Gas Monthly February 2000

However, under pressure for more private sector involvement in what is seen to be a market ripe for expansion for medical and insurance companies with a global reach, there has been what some in the consultation believe is an “invented crisis.” The argument put forward by proponents of an expanded role by for-profit companies, is that health care costs are escalating out of control due to new technologies and a growing and aging population. Canada, they continue, can no longer afford “free” health care.¹⁷ Therefore, we need to open up the system to private insurance and private companies. These arguments are not supported by independent evidence based research. This was viewed as a more subtle and insidious way of further expanding for-profit delivery that Canadians would not accept otherwise.¹⁸ It was noted that such an expansion of privatization would also be irreversible and Canada could lose much of its public system because of some of the provisions in the NAFTA and other trade agreements.¹⁹ The debate over the future of health care in Canada is a much larger discussion and does have more complex dynamics. What is important for this discussion is that the future of health care is also a debate about the future of democracy. Many expressed the fear that the politicians could not be trusted to safe guard a system of public and universal health care that the majority of Canadians want and are prepared to pay more to keep, against the powerful economic interests.

Canadian author Peter C. Newman points out, Canada is in the midst of a “revolution.” It is a uniquely Canadian style revolution whereby Canadians are no longer deferential to their leaders but rather defiant toward all authority.²⁰ They question if their leaders are truly prepared to safeguard their interests and the public interest and if they are even able any longer to work for the common good. Many Canadians have caught on to the paradoxical political pathology whereby politicians seem to have signed away all their power in various trade agreements, abdicated decisions to the private sector, given away the resources through tax breaks and then turned to the public to say “We can’t do anything, but vote for us to do even less for you.”

Social Paradox

Advocates claim that economic globalization will improve the quality of life and assure the preservation of social programs like health care. Yet the paradox is that Canada’s social programs have been steadily undermined and weakened over the past two decades while new programs are unimaginable.

¹⁷ It is important to note that Canadians do pay for health care through the tax system.

¹⁸ It is important to note that 30 percent of Canada’s medical care is currently delivered by the private for-profit companies. The objective is to prevent further expansion of privatization.

¹⁹ Under the terms of NAFTA, companies are entitled to what is called “national treatment.” This means that once de-listed, a service can be delivered through a private provider. Companies can then sue for compensation for any return to public provision of those services making it virtually impossible. (See Box 4 Investor-State Mechanisms)

²⁰ Peter C Newman, The Canadian Revolution, From Deference to Defiance (Viking Penguin Books Canada, Toronto: 1995)

These are insecure times in Canada but even more so for vulnerable people. With the exception of Alberta and British Columbia, poverty rates were stable across the country for most of the 1980s, but in the 1990s they began to increase dramatically. In 1981 the first food bank opened in Edmonton, Alberta. Since then it has become a growth industry. Today there are at least 615 food banks and another 2,213 agencies helping the estimated 727,000 people who have come to rely on emergency food aid.²¹ Many of those coming to food banks are the “working poor” who cannot earn enough to eat and afford a place to live.

These are insecure times for children. In spite of strong economic growth, child poverty dropped only marginally from 19 to 18.5 percent. One in five children, close to 1.5 million children, are living in poverty. The levels of poverty are deeper and longer in duration than in 1989 when an all party resolution was passed in Parliament pledging to end child poverty by the year 2000.

These are insecure times for people looking for a place to call home. In 2000, there were approximately 35,000 to 40,000 homeless people in Canada. There is a national housing crisis. Families with dependent children are the fastest growing group using emergency shelters. Working people are one of the largest groups in shelters because they cannot find affordable housing.

These are even more insecure times, for Aboriginal peoples. There are about 1,000 reserves and settlement communities in Canada. These represent 60 to 80 Aboriginal nations.²² In *Gathering Strength*, the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Commission points out that although living standards have improved for native peoples, they remain much worse than those of non-native people. Life expectancy is lower. Illness is much more common. Family violence, substance and alcohol abuse remain a problem. There are fewer aboriginal children that complete high school and fewer young people that continue on to university and college. “The homes of Aboriginal people are more often flimsy, leaky, and overcrowded. Water and sanitation systems in Aboriginal communities are inadequate.”²³ Unemployment is much higher in First Nations communities. There are a larger percentage of aboriginal people in the nations jails and correctional facilities. The Royal Commission estimates that it would cost \$7 billion to address these issues now. It will cost much more in the future.

²¹ See Hunger Count, A Surplus of Hunger, Canada’s Annual Survey of Emergency Food Programs, (Canadian Association of Food Banks, October 2000)

²² See the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Fact Sheet #6, The Aboriginal Rights Coalition (ARC). ARC is an ecumenical coalition supported by the Canadian churches including the ELCIC.

²³ People to People, Nation to Nation: Highlights from the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, (Government of Canada, Minister of Supply and Services, 1996) p.2.

Canadians are aware of these realities and the inability or unwillingness of those in positions of leadership, who themselves have benefited, to make some necessary sacrifices to see that the needs of people are addressed. One third of Canadians know of someone who relies on a food bank. Seventy-eight percent of Canadians feel that “hunger” is quite serious and 68 percent believe governments have a responsibility for the solution.²⁴ But over the decade of the 1990s, governments have been moving in the opposite direction. They cut welfare rates on average 12 percent across the country (21.6% in 1995 in Ontario alone) and slashed the number of people who qualified for unemployment insurance from 87 percent in 1986 to 47 percent in 1997, while often voting themselves double-digit raises. Political leaders failed to develop a National Affordable Housing Strategy. They were unable to initiate significant public investment in early childhood development or increase substantially the National Children’s Benefit. The extensive list of recommendations from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples are not even being discussed.

Box 3 - Boom... Bust... Good Bye

Many one-industry, one-resource, or farm communities face a similar problem. When the economy goes bust or the plant leaves town or agricultural prices fall, people have to leave to find work.

In Thompson, Tumbler Ridge, Uranium City, Leaf Rapids, Elliot Lake or other communities like them, when global forces conspire, a community of 6000 can become a ghost town of 1500 overnight looking for a future.

For communities like Bridgewater, North Bay, Hanover and other small towns, it is harder to find people “downtown” and even harder to attract employers that will provide work so “young people” will stay in the community.

Canadians have traditionally worked collectively through public institutions to insure access to health care, post-secondary education and social security. Yet, as many observed, governments are abandoning their responsibilities to their most vulnerable citizens. This has been an opportunity for churches and volunteers but many of them are not able to meet the ever mounting needs. Those coordinating emergency shelter programs and food banks warn that their volunteers are “burning out.” Temporary measures (food banks and “out-of-the cold” shelters in churches) have become permanent. Ironically, the offices of some of the politicians who supported cuts to government programs, are referring those in need who show up at their offices, to churches and church agencies. Some in the churches are worried that charity has become a substitute for what justice requires.

Government resources are not being replaced by private charity. This seems to be confirmed by a recent OECD study which reported that Canada’s “net total social expenditure,” including public and private, is lower than that of many Western nations and it has been falling faster. According to the report Canada’s net total social expenditure was 18.9% of GDP, down

²⁴ The Totem Report, The Canadian Association of Food Banks, 2000.

1.7% since 1995. The U.S. was 21.8% and Germany 28.8%. The average for the nine countries higher than Canada was 23.7%.²⁵ So while globalization was supposed to improve the social well being of people, paradoxically social exclusion in Canada is on the increase and leaders seem unable at best or at worse indifferent to the needs of people and communities, and the voluntary sector is unable to fill the gap left behind.

Ecological Paradox

There is a greater awareness in the public about the needs to safeguard the environment. Unlike twenty years ago when the Club of Rome produced its “Limits to Growth” report which detailed how economic growth would be curtailed if we failed to consider environmental costs, the issue today is that this world may be reaching the limits of its carrying capacity for all life itself. Advocates of globalization argue that we are creating a “new economy” based upon information and knowledge that allows for an almost infinite growth that will not harm the environment. They also suggest that in an increasingly interdependent world, there will be greater incentives for ecological preservation. However, the paradox is, that increased trade and the consumption it requires to drive it, seems to put even new and more powerful pressures on the environment. Corporations seem unwilling to consider any limits or environment measures unless they are strictly voluntary. This is particularly true than as it pertains to water resources and energy consumption in Canada.

Canada with 0.5 percent of the world population is blessed with 9 percent of the world’s water resources. By way of comparison, the United States with 4.7% of the world’s population has only 1 percent of the available water.²⁶ Canadians have been somewhat complacent about water, believing water to be a public resource in abundant and safe supply. At least two concerns are beginning to emerge that challenge this complacency.

First, fresh-water resources are abundant but they are predominantly the responsibility of provincial governments. With many areas of the United States facing water shortages, this has resulted in increasing pressure to make water a “commodity” to allow for bulk water shipments to the United States within the framework of trade agreements. Increasingly, provincial governments are assigning rights of ownership to private interests. In Ontario for example, water taking permits have been issued that allow for the withdrawal of 18 billion litres (4.8 billion gallons) each year from ground water sources for bottling companies and water resale.²⁷ Newfoundland recently caused a reaction of people across the country when it seriously entertained the idea of tanker shipments of water from one of its remote lakes. There are other

²⁵ O.E.C.D. National Comparison 2001.

²⁶ Aruni de Silva, “The Sale of Canadian Water to the United States” , June 1997, Environment Probe, Toronto, Ontario. <<http://www.environmentprobe.org/enviroprobe/>>.

²⁷ The Council of Canadians’ Submission to the Walkerton Inquiry, September 25, 2002, <<http://www.canadians.org/>>.

examples where water is being seen as a commodity for trade rather than a public good. At its synod assembly in 2000, the BC Synod passed a motion opposing the commodification of water and expressed its opposition to the Prime Minister and the Premier of Newfoundland. The driving trade imperative of globalization is threatening the notion of the abundance of water as a public resource in Canada.

A second threat has to do with the public stewardship of water resources currently in Canada. In Walkerton, Ontario in May 2000, the public water supply became contaminated with e-coli bacteria that killed seven people and caused half of the town's 5000 residents to become ill and some with health effects that will last a lifetime. Justice Dennis O'Connor headed a government inquiry that found that there was a system wide collapse involving local officials and Environment Ministry workers but also included a government that was bent on privatization.²⁸ Other communities like North Battleford, Saskatchewan, have also been affected by unsafe water. Many aboriginal communities have an unsafe water supply in spite of being in remote regions of the country where one assumes more pristine lakes. Canadians are alarmed that they may not have a "safe" water supply due either to the press to privatize public resources and utilities or because governments, starved for resources, will not make the necessary investment in the physical infrastructure.

Water issues will be further exacerbated by the threat of climate change due to greenhouse effect. For example, Environment Canada predicts that doubling the carbon dioxide will result in a 50 percent decrease in moisture content in soil with a dramatic impact on agriculture on the prairies. The effects are predicted to be more dramatic in the United States.

Canadians have a huge appetite for energy, spending \$75 billion annually (10% of GDP) on energy to heat homes and public buildings as well as to operate cars, factories and appliances. Thirty million Canadians consume more energy than 700 million Africans. Energy exploration, production and export contribute significantly to Canada's GDP.²⁹ That consumption has grown about 13 percent from 1990 to 1998 and with it has come a 17 percent (1.5% annually) increase in the emissions of greenhouse gases during the 1990s.³⁰

²⁸ Colin Perkel, "Ontario premier sorry after report blames government in preventable E. Coli disaster", Canadian Press, January 18, 2002.

²⁹ Canada ranks as the world's sixth largest user of primary energy. Its high energy consumption can be attributed to a number of factors: vast distances, a cold climate, an energy-intensive industrial base, relatively low energy prices, and a high standard of living. Canada's proximity to abundant energy resources has contributed to keeping energy prices lower than in many other industrialized countries. Of the energy used in Canada 27% goes to transportation, while 39% is used by industry. The remaining 34% is used in agriculture, in residences, schools, hospitals, offices and businesses (Natural Resources Canada, 1996). About 70% of industry's share is consumed by five industries: pulp and paper, metal smelting, steel making, mining and petrochemicals. In 1994, energy production was responsible for nearly 8% of Canada's gross domestic product (GDP) (excluding gas service stations, wholesale petroleum products and propane), 17% of gross investment, and 10% of gross export income. See Environment Canada <<http://www.ec.gc.ca/ind/english/energy/bulletin>>.

At the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was adopted whereby countries made a general commitment to take steps on climate change. In signing the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the industrialised world collectively agreed to reduce its emissions by at least 5% below 1990 levels by the years 2008-2012. Canada signed this protocol and indicated its commitment to reduce its emissions by the slightly higher amount of 6% below 1990 levels by 2008-2012. To make this signature binding, however, Canada must ratify the treaty. Even with a ratified agreement and assuming these targets are achieved, global totals are projected to increase to approximately 30% above 1990 levels by 2010 and by 60% by 2020 with major consequences.

President Bush has said that the United States will not ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Given Canada's emission levels and its proximity to the United States, it will be difficult for Canada to meet these targets. This may in part explain why Canada has supported new terms for the protocol that would commit industrialized countries to cutting emissions by 5.2 percent but with the various "loopholes" could see actual emissions rise by 15 percent.³¹

Participants in the consultation expressed the concern that globalization was having an adverse impact on the environment and the legacy being left to future generations. A 1999 survey done for Environment Canada revealed a quiet but ever increasing public concern for the

Box 4 NAFTA'S CHAPTER 11 – A CASE THE INVESTOR-STATE MECHANISMS

Canada banned the importation of a gasoline additive called MMT, produced by Virginia-based Ethyl Corporation. The government had evidence that MMT was both a health and an environmental hazard.

Canadian officials went into the case with confidence, but despite the fact that NAFTA is supposed to allow governments to pass environmental legislation, it was clear from deliberations of the tribunal that Canada was going to lose the case. Rather than face a US\$250 million penalty based on the loss of future profits claimed by Ethyl, Canada decided to settle under the following conditions: a US\$13-million payment to Ethyl, the removal of the ban on MMT in Canadian gasoline, and a public apology to Ethyl for implying that its product was hazardous.

The proceedings were conducted in secret, in accordance with the NAFTA Investment chapter provisions, and were widely criticized in Canada. They provided a rude awakening regarding the impacts of the NAFTA expropriation provision. They also resulted in a direct reduction of Canadian health and environmental protections.

From "Trading Away the Future", A Background Paper prepared by the Social Affairs Commission on the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (January 2002)

³⁰ See Information from the David Suzuki Foundation <<http://www.davidsuzuki.org>>.

³¹ "Canada's climate summit position dangerous: New report shows policies at UN summit will increase emissions," October 29, 2000, The David Suzuki Foundation <<http://www.davidsuzuki.org>>

environment. Eighty-two percent of Canadians are “very upset” about the threats to nature.³² There is an increasing gap between the public expectation that government should take responsibility to act and their perceived poor performance. Privatization and deregulation are threatening public safety and failing to protect the environment.

As well, under NAFTA’s Chapter 11, corporations can now sue governments directly for loss of profits. (See Box 4, Investor State Mechanisms). This has had a further chilling effect on government’s willingness to act. Since NAFTA in 1995, the Canadian government has introduced only two regulations to protect the environment. Both were withdrawn under threat of suits filed under NAFTA’s Chapter 11.³³

Reactions to economic globalization remain highly volatile. Many in the consultation do believe that there are benefits but that they are not being equally shared. One consistent theme is the weakened role of government and the inability of the political process to protect the right of citizens to make collective decisions that will address these problems, particularly if they defy the interests of large corporations. At stake are some fundamental values. As one synod Bishop said, “One of the hardest things is to think theologically when our values have been invaded by the world more than the Gospel. We end up buying into the system and merely mouthing the ‘cultural values.’”

Some Canadian Theological Responses

During much of the past century, Canadian ecumenism has been shaped by the efforts of churches together to respond to the problems and social dislocation caused by the industrialization of Canada. Lutheranism too, particularly that of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and its predecessors, has been shaped by its collaboration in mission and witness with the other churches in addressing the needs of Canadians. Globalization represents the next challenge for Canadian churches.

During the past ten years, the theological response of the ELCIC to globalization has been founded on at least three significant theological themes; a theology of the cross, a theology of Jubilee, and a more subtle and emerging theology of resistance. These three themes were present in many of the responses from participants in this consultation process.

³² “Public Opinion and the Environment, 1999,” Environment Canada.

³³ “Trading Away Democracy” with Bill Moyer, PBS Television.

The first of these theological themes – **a theology of the cross** – was the basis of a visioning process for the ELCIC in the early 1990s. The Future Directions Taskforce began a process of analysing the current social moment in Canada. Members engaged the church in discussion of the underlying values embedded in our cultural understanding about work and vocation and how they impacted on the mission of the ELCIC in Canada. While not all members were prepared to surrender some cherished cultural assumptions, in adopting the Evangelical Declaration the ELCIC rejected the core values of economic globalization, the shallow hope of individual economic prosperity, and pressures which ultimately make people a commodity. (See Box 5)

At the 1995 convention delegates called for a social statement to more concretely address the new economics of globalization. In the intervening biennial, the church discussed some of the paradoxes posed by economic globalization and some of the biblical “guideposts” to help understand how churches might respond to the challenges posed by economic globalization. In 1997, the ELCIC adopted the social statement Horizons for the Reign of God, Discerning the Path of Sustainable Social Economics. The statement reaffirmed that the “. . . Church has both a pastoral and a prophetic mission to undertake in service to the world.”³⁴ It called upon members of the ELCIC along with others to work for a “new social covenant based on justice”. It recommended some specific measures to guide actions that might be taken.

For twenty-five years, the Canadian churches have had a joint witness to justice through what are known as the “ecumenical coalitions.” As the year 2000 approached, the churches began to explore the meaning of **a Jubilee theology** for their ecumenical witness. Grounded in

Box 5

From the Evangelical Declaration of the ELCIC

“We understand that the present reality of the world involves significant changes in our society, economy and culture. Technological innovations, globalization, economic and political uncertainties, and shifting morals and values have increased the sense of insecurity for many people. We have been falsely taught to derive our identity only from our work – yet jobs are not secure. These changes confront us with the reality that the needs of the world and our opportunities for mission are found on our doorsteps and not simply at a distance.”

“We believe that the reality of Christ is that God promises to be with us unconditionally in the midst of the changes in our world. The church is called to name those things that cause us to be less than human. The church is called to proclaim the truth of the gospel to others and to live according to it ourselves. The church is called to stand in solidarity with and to welcome into our midst all those who are marginalized because of sin and who experience injustice. The cross of Christ stands opposed to any ideology that proclaims that people can earn salvation by hard work or positive thinking. The cross of Christ stands opposed to any ideology which treats people as commodities.”

³⁴ “Horizons for the Reign of God - Discerning the Path of Sustainable Social Economics”, (The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Winnipeg:1997) p. 35.

our common biblical history, churches were invited to support an alternative social vision that would “reconnect justice, peace, ecological integrity, and holiness in teaching that puts right relation (or *shalom*) at the centre of our faithful lives.”³⁵ The Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative (CEJI) was a three year effort that focussed on three biblical themes; (1) release from bondage, (2) redistribution of wealth, and (3) rest for the land. The churches hosted three major theological conferences on these themes. They employed an action-reflection dynamic that discussed theology in terms of how it might be applied to supporting CEJI’s campaigns for debt cancellation, in support of aboriginal rights, to reduce greenhouse gases causing climate change and against child poverty. It brought together activists and theologians as well as representatives from other faiths.

Many of those who participated in the conversations about “Engaging Globalization” were very involved in the CEJI. They understood the congruence of the Jubilee imperative to restore right relationships with the view that “God is community, relationship, self-giving love... People are in relationships with one another, not for the purpose of economic gain, but for the sake of loving, sharing, and enjoying that which each contributes to the whole community.”³⁶ Uncomfortable with the language of “idolatry”, many nevertheless felt that the combination of wealth, power, and domination had abdicated too much authority to the dynamics of markets without allowing for intentional human actions to restore right relationships among people and build stronger communities.

There was also un-easiness with the theological implications for ministry that a conversation about economic globalizations might involve. A number of participants felt that the church was not prepared for a theological discussion of economic globalization in the congregations if it threatened certain interests. One participant put it boldly. “Some prominent members of the congregation are the greatest beneficiaries and they resent any opposing message, others are indifferent, and still others will not talk about it because they are too frightened because it will threaten their jobs. In their circumstances, the gospel is not an alternative for them.”

Overall, there was a feeling that the momentum of economic globalization was irreversible. In the face of this inevitability some argued that Christians were called to “humanize” globalization by pressing for reforms that helped those who were impacted. Others felt that stronger more direct action was necessary. Though not supportive of the minority who engaged in violent anti-globalization demonstrators in Seattle, Quebec City, Washington, or Genoa, there was considerable support for those who were trying to peacefully express their desire for alternatives to the kind of globalization being imposed on people. What characterized these responses was the idea of a **theology of resistance** to the “wrong kind of globalization”, to

³⁵ “A New Beginning – A Call for Jubilee” (The Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative, Toronto, 1998) p. 11.

³⁶ “Engaging Globalization as a Communion,” p.14.

the cultural values of the market, and to the policies of economic globalization driven by individual consumerism and that lead to the commodification of people. This was theology of resistance that might allow the church to model in part the kind of community that economic globalization could not realize.

Some Actions Taken by the ELCIC and the Canadian Churches

Throughout much of this period of economic globalization, the Canadian churches – including the ELCIC – have been raising questions about the impact the economic policies of the “Washington Consensus.” The churches were involved in proposing alternatives to the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada (better known as the Macdonald Commission – 1985-87) that encouraged free trade with the United States. More recently the church leaders wrote to the Heads of State meeting in Quebec City regarding the Free Trade of the Americas Agreement (FTAA) proposing the following,

“We believe that the following critical policy points need your urgent attention:

- (1) Conform any new agreements to the human rights standards in UN covenants,
- (2) Protect and promote the inherent rights of Aboriginal peoples in the Americas,
- (3) Cancel paralysing national debts,
- (4) Enhance food security and the security of agricultural communities,
- (5) Preserve the integrity of publicly funded health and education services, and
- (6) Don’t let patents, or trade-related intellectual property rights, block access to public goods like life-saving medicines.”¹

These recommendations reflect twenty-five years whereby the churches has been trying to assure that justice is done for those most adversely affected by these globalizing economic policies.

Churches also have been engaged in extensive research and in translating that research into an educational effort with their members. During the national debate on the Canada-U.S. FTA, the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice (ECEJ) hosted a national conference to brief church representatives on the implications of the FTA and discuss how to respond.¹ Then in the mid-1990s, the churches began what was known as the **Moral Economy Project**. This project was an effort to “demystify economics” and to train local and regional leaders across Canada to lead workshops that would empower people to discuss economic choices. The churches had a Ten Days for Global Justice network of some 200 ecumenical committees across

³⁷ “A Letter from Church Leaders Concerning the Summit of the Americas,” April 9, 2001, The Canadian Council of Churches, <<http://www.ccc-cce.ca/english>>

³⁸ The Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice (ECEJ) was formerly known as GATT-FLY which was created in 1973 to do research and coordinate the response of the Canadian churches to issues of international trade and development. In 2001, ECEJ was brought into Kairos-Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, an ecumenical organization that addresses issues of human rights, aboriginal rights, social development, global economic justice and eco-justice on behalf of the Canadian churches.

the country committed to development education and an annual action campaign. This project further strengthened that network of animators and helped people feel more confident to engage in discussions about economic issues. It also help set the stage for the **Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative (CEJI)**.

In addition to the theological deliberation mentioned earlier, CEJI was also a three year program of action oriented campaigns that built upon previous efforts by the churches. By far the most dramatic was the campaign to cancel the debt of the fifty poorest countries in the world. 647,000 Canadians, roughly one in fifty, signed petitions calling upon the government to take action. This was part of a global Jubilee Campaign that collected some 17 million signatures in support of debt cancellation. Canada's Minister of Finance, Paul Martin, has said this effort by the churches put the "debt issue" on the agenda of the G-8 world leaders. As a Roman Catholic, he has joked that there wasn't a parish he attended for worship where someone didn't corner him about debt cancellation. But the Canadian churches went beyond the international Jubilee Initiative. In October 1997, CEJI delivered over 50,000 signatures to the federal government calling upon it to take urgent action on climate change. CEJI has collected over 50,000 signatures on petitions calling for an independent land and treaty rights tribunal to resolve the hundreds of backlogged issues for First Nations. There were also campaigns on child poverty and immigration. All of these campaigns had common educational materials based upon the respected research of the Canadian churches and their partners.

The Canadian churches were not content to address just the public policy makers. In the early 1970s the Canadian churches discovered that through their investments they were profiting from Apartheid in South Africa and Namibia. Since then, through the Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility (TCCR), churches were the first group to be active in advocacy for greater corporate social and ecological responsibility with corporations. TCCR has been instrumental in articulating principles for corporate social responsibility, developing and monitoring codes of conduct for corporations, the creation of "screened mutual funds", the "ethical screening" of existing portfolios, reviewing the Canadian Business Corporations Act, supporting shareholder rights, and in the creation of the Social Investment Organization (SIO). In 1993, in partnership with the Ecumenical Centre for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR) in the United Kingdom and the Inter-Church Centre for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) in the United States, TCCR developed **Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Benchmarks for Measuring Business Performance**.¹ The churches have been field-testing these and how they might be used as a guide for corporations and as a tool for those wishing to force corporations to be more social and environmentally responsible in conducting their business. As the impact of business practices due to economic globalization is better known, some progressive business leaders are beginning to realize that the public is increasingly demanding that they be more transparent and accountable for the consequences of how they conduct their business activities.

³⁹ See Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility: Benchmarks for Measuring Business Performance, (The Taskforce for Churches and Corporate Responsibility, Toronto, 1998) TCCR is now a part of Kairos-Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiatives.

A surprising but not-so-surprising observation came from one pastor who said that he was responding to economic globalization in providing pastoral care. In communities where there is high unemployment and possible further job losses, there is tremendous pressure placed upon people and communities. “A lot of people feel impotent and powerless which in turn leads to resentment and anger. This has disastrous results. When it is internalized, it can lead to illness, nervous breakdown and family conflict and break-up. This rage and anger at things that are beyond their control is often expressed in inappropriate ways.” Dr. Cam Harder of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon, has shown how when farmers about to lose their family farm due to global dynamics beyond their control can result in shame and withdrawal precisely at the very time when they may need support.¹ Dr. Harder points to the problem for pastors,

“As the pastor of a town congregation in a rural setting, I have found that my sensitivity to the problem is greatly diminished by the fact that farmers who are active in our church are those who are doing well. They, not the farmers in crisis, have time to devote to church leadership and programs. Because most of my contact is with them, I am left with the impression that things are well in the farm community, or at least that any problems can be solved with good management (the sort in evidence on *their* farms). My failure to attend to those in trouble is taken by them as confirmation of their fall from grace.”¹

Being attentive to the “voices not heard” needs to inform the practice of pastoral care. In industry towns and smaller rural communities, one response of the church has been to provide pastoral care for those who have been victims of the economy.

These are some examples of how Canadian churches and the ELCIC have been responding. There are others to be sure. Some of these as were pointed out only briefly in the consultation are taking place at the local level involving congregation-to-congregation relationships between two countries, or partner synod programs between churches (i.e., Saskatchewan Synod and Argentina, Eastern Synod and Guyana) or youth groups working against “sweatshops,” in support of climate change, or raising money to help in other parts of the world. All felt that these were an encouraging way to make connections and increase understanding between people and communities against the dehumanizing side of economic globalization.

⁴⁰ Cam Harder, “The Shaming of Canada’s Farmers: A Christian Response” (Consensus, A Canadian Lutheran Journal of Theology, Vol. 21. No.2, 1995) p.p. 59-75.

⁴¹ Harder, p .61.

Possibilities for the Ministry of the ELCIC and the Lutheran World Federation

Many of the participants in this consultation recognized the importance – even if they did not feel prepared – of talking about “globalization.” “Engaging Globalization as A Communion” did stir in participants some larger theological and ethical questions but there was a general feeling that addressing the questions would take more time.

As was suggested earlier, the conversation was more helpful when it focussed more specifically on the policies of economic globalization and their impact on people and communities. While not unanimous, there was concern for those who were on the losing end of economic globalization. In these discussions, participants identified four areas of adverse impact that the church might address. The first was **increasing poverty**. The second was **access to sufficient employment** to sustain families and communities. The third was environmental protection and **preserving the creation** for the future. The fourth was **restoring democracy and citizen participation**.

Most believed the church should focus its attention on the situations facing those who have not benefited and whose lives have become worse because of policies of globalization imposed on them. Among the ideas proposed were the following;

For the ELCIC

- 1) There needed to be more **encouragement for education** about the impact of policies of globalization on people.
- 2) Members need more help in developing the skills of ethical and social analysis to better understand the causes of the adverse impacts of globalization and to be prepared to engage more regularly in **moral deliberation as a community of faith**.
- 3) Members also needed more **deliberate discussion of faith convictions**, particularly as they pertain to stewardship and money, and how those convictions should inform the ministry of the church and the Christian life and vocation in the world.
- 4) There needs to be more **people-to-people and community-to-community exchanges**, particularly between those who benefit and those who do not, to foster greater understanding, encourage dialogue, and consider joint actions where possible.
- 5) There is a need for the ELCIC at all levels to **listen to the victims** both in the church and in the community, much like what happened regarding gay and lesbian members in the “Caring Conversation” process or when Islamic leaders were invited to meetings following the events of September 11.
- 6) There was a **reaffirmation of the ELCIC’s ecumenical work for social justice** and the

importance of research, educational materials and joint campaigns to provide a common Christian witness and have an impact. And there was an encouragement for the ELCIC at all levels to work with community groups and other Non-Governmental Organizations who are pursuing alternatives.

For the Lutheran World Federation

- 1) There was an appreciation for LWF **developing theological and ethical perspectives on globalization**. LWF was encouraged to share a variety of perspectives that reflect the diversity of experience rather than developing one position or a consensus perspective.
- 2) LWF might facilitate formal north/south, south/south, and north/north **consultations among churches** to exchange their experiences and perspectives. An alternative might be to facilitate **pastoral visits** to churches to discuss the implications of economic globalization. The LWF could develop some models or suggested formats for how these might be conducted as well as a possible list of resource people who might be available.
- 3) LWF might offer suggestions on how **theological schools** could include globalization in their curriculum and facilitate exchanges between **theological students and faculty** to share experiences and build relationships for the future.
- 4) The **Human Rights work of the LWF** was affirmed and LWF's participation in and support of international institutions like the United Nations.
- 5) LWF might coordinate a **joint campaign** on a specific issue that would have local, national and international dimensions. This might not focus on "globalization per se" but rather on an issue that might address the impacts. (e.g., Official Development Assistance, Human Rights and Trade etc.)
- 6) LWF might collect information on **who is doing what and where** on issues related to globalization. This might facilitate resource sharing.

Some Concluding Observations

In 1987, Simon Reissman, Canada's chief trade negotiator told Canadians, "The only thing that the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) gives us is trade access (to the U.S.) if we want it!"⁴² (emphasis added) Most Canadians believe that trade agreements have brought us much more than just "access." Economic globalization has had a great impact on the lives of people and communities in Canada. It is not surprising that many people have ambiguous feelings about economic globalization.

⁴² An interview with Peter Gzowsky on Morningside, CBC , 1988.

One of the central points of consensus has been that economic globalization has weakened the bonds that hold people and communities together. In the face of tremendous pressures to reduce all relationships to economic ones, there is a role for the churches to play in insuring the public space for safe-guarding our important relationship, for renewing the ones that are broken, and in vigorously asserting the importance of relationships as necessary to our humanness. This will be even more important in the wake of the events of September 11.

In Canada, one of the keys to addressing globalization may be determined if and how Canada seeks reconciliation and restoration in its relationship with First Nations. With regret the Canadian churches – mainly Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and the United Church – have acknowledged and apologized for their complicity in the government’s program of assimilation through residential schools that took native children from their families and communities. This has meant that in addition to many of the difficulties mentioned earlier, healing and reconciliation in the relationship between native and non-native peoples will be painful and arduous, but not impossible challenge.

For non-native people, reconciliation with aboriginal peoples will force us to acknowledge the sins of our history. But it may also be a way to discover enriching new ways and forms that our relationship might take. Laila Watson, an Australian Aboriginal woman, has probably said it best, “If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”⁷¹ This process may lead not only to a new relationship, but equally important may help us discover a new vision of the right kind of globalization for the future community God intends for our country and our world.

⁴³ Justice and Reconciliation, The Legacy of Indian Residential Schools and the Journey Toward Reconciliation (The United Church of Canada, Toronto, 2001) p.50.