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Authors: Lambrick, Melanie

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Abstract: The article presents an argument against globalization. It is the author's opinion that globalization exists to benefit multinational corporations and developed nations. Particular focus is given to the economic effects of globalization on workers in developed and developing countries. Impacts of globalization including privatization, industrialization, and environmental degradation are discussed. The spread of western influence at the global level is also explored.

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Full Text

Thesis: The globalization process was created in the economic interests of transnational corporations and rich nations. As a result, international and domestic equality are put at risk, culture and democracy are threatened, and serious environmental damage is incurred.

Summary: Globalization has been created predominantly by economic world powers to serve their own interests. It is not a neutral or inevitable process. Globalization challenges many cornerstones of Western life, including equality, environmental protection, democracy, and cultural diversity. Such changes have met with protest from a worldwide "anti-globalization" movement. This movement highlights the importance of assessing the meaning of globalization, its direction, and its compatibility with community principles and future goals.

The Globalization Story

Most portrayals of globalization emphasize a natural and progressive view of increased international integration as a result of developments in transport and communication. As this occurs, it is important to remember that such integration is part of the larger historical process of industrialization and, like industrialization, globalization is the product of choices made by powerful actors. As a result of these choices, life has changed all over the world, but these changes do not affect everyone in the same way. Economic capacity gives transnational corporations and the leaders of powerful industrial nations the power to promote increased trade and advance communications, which they do to benefit their own agendas. Therefore, it stands to reason that their economic interests will be paramount in the unfolding process of globalization. This process is designed so that trade liberalization, privatization, international finance and transnational corporations all thrive. Because it is guided mainly by monetary interest, it is most appropriate to call this process economic globalization.

The massive worldwide anti-globalization movement is evidence that globalization is neither inevitable nor a means of progress for all. Actors within this movement come from diverse social classes, age groups and cultures. Despite their differences, they have banded together to draw attention to the economic and political problems with globalization. Protesters at world summits, anti-privatization political networks and international organized labour all participate in anti-globalization efforts. Economic globalization is only one possible direction for the future, and anti-globalization activists assert that it is not a desirable direction while suggesting alternatives.

Unequal Players

Globalization benefits those with access to international networks while excluding all others. Through this practice, inequality grows at both the state and international level. For example, within Canada and the United States (US) workers who possess globally-applicable skills are offered high-paying jobs within transnational companies. At the same time, workers in industries such as manufacturing are losing their jobs. This happens because transnational corporations are able to pick and choose where their workers come from. Due to reduced trade barriers, these corporations can move factories out of Western countries such as Canada and the US and into countries without minimum wage laws or stringent labour practices. Cheap labour enables them to produce goods inexpensively and make higher profits. The result is an ever-increasing income gap between different kinds of workers.

This income gap is also apparent between nations. As countries with resources for advanced communication and transportation take advantage of new global markets, the economies of many developing nations are left behind. The resulting increase in global inequality was noted by the United Nations (UN) in its 1992 Development Program Report, which declared that the richest 20 percent of the world's population earn over 82 percent of the world's income.

Movers and Shakers

As mentioned above, globalization promotes the movement of production to certain cost-effective sites. During this process, workers often are forced to move as well, in order to find jobs within growing industrialized areas. This movement is emotionally, financially and culturally traumatic. In some areas where workers move and cannot afford to resettle, urban slums develop. These slums are overcrowded, unsanitary and dangerous.

In industrialized nations such as Canada, workers are affected negatively by the fluid labour structure promoted by globalization. When job markets become internationally competitive, organized labour becomes less practical. Demands for health and dental plans, pensions and vacations no longer are negotiable, as workers can be replaced by those in poorer

countries, who will demand less. A trend toward privatization favours contracting out jobs in the public sector to the cheapest source. This means that more people are working for low hourly wages instead of high salaries. Public employees lose their jobs as private firms take over community services. In poor countries, exploited workers work long hours for pitiful wages with little or no benefits. Labourers everywhere are pitted against each other in a struggle that results in work for those who provide the cheapest (and therefore least secure) employment.

To the End of the Earth

The economic push of globalization is just as disastrous for the environment as it is for equality and labour. The environmental impacts of increased production and transportation are clear, as climate change has been linked directly to human industrial activity. As globalization is dependent on ever-increasing amounts of transportation, production, and consumption, it is only a matter of time before environmental disaster strikes. This urgent problem is neglected because in the progress of globalization, which is motivated by money, things that have no price, like air and water, are not accounted for. Considering the ongoing depletion of the ozone layer, rising sea levels and decreasing fresh water supplies, it seems the economics of globalization are on a crash course with the planet's survival.

Poisoned Diversity and the Death of Democracy

While globalization's worldwide influence affects everyone differently, the net result can be homogenizing. Globalization requires certain processes, like a free market economy and a flexible labour force, in order to function. These processes are developed and used by global decision-makers, and others must adopt these processes in order to participate successfully in globalization. If they do not or cannot, their economies will be affected negatively. Thus, globalization forces those who want to participate in the international economy to assume a liberal capitalist mode of organization. Such influence extends beyond economics to general lifestyle, time management and philosophy. Alternately called "Americanization" or "Westernization," this phenomenon is compounded by the spread of Western influence through increased communication, product distribution, and travel and results in a loss of cultural diversity. Other economic systems, languages and non-commercial organizations rapidly are being replaced with a single liberal capitalist way of life. In light of the problems mentioned above, an economically globalized system hardly seems the best solution for everyone; yet soon it may be the only solution available.

Globalization's economic power forces nations to make certain decisions impinging on states' sovereignty. If a nation wants to participate in the international economy, become wealthy and affect global decisions, it must adjust its laws to make them amenable to international investment. This can take the form of actions such as lowering taxes for corporations, subsidizing development, and providing cheap labour. To finance these

actions, welfare programs such as health insurance are cut, and citizens' taxes are raised. In an international arena where every nation is competing for investment, domestic interests are abandoned.

As the sovereignty of the state is compromised, where does democracy fit in? Many claim that globalization promotes the spread of democracy along with the Western way of life. This may be partially true, as international lending agencies like the World Bank insist on the institution of democracy in client countries. Whether or not the resulting political and social systems are beneficial or truly democratic, states are instituting more democratic processes as a result of globalization. It would seem, then, that globalization is beneficial for democracy. Yet, on a worldwide level, democracy is weakening along with state power. Contemporary democracy is designed to work at the state level and is dependent upon shared experience and values for success. This is not possible globally. Moreover, globalization decisions about labour standards and the environment are not being decided by democratic national or international governments; they are being made by transnational corporations. Even those that oppose globalization, such as international non-governmental organizations, are not democratic because they do not represent everyone affected by globalization. As the decisions that influence people's lives are being shifted to the international arena, state level democracy appears to be increasingly limited as an institution.

Conclusion

Globalization is driven by the economic interests of a relatively small group of players, yet it impacts the lives of everyone on the planet. This process puts equality, the environment, diversity and democracy at risk while constraining any one nation's ability to protect the interests of its citizens. Globalization is the result of a process put into motion by liberal capitalist interests, and it is possible that other interests can put into motion alternative processes. However, the homogenizing effects of globalization reduce alternative possibilities every day. Therefore, the negative impacts of this spreading problem must be recognized immediately; action cannot be deferred.

Ponder This

1. This essay uses the term globalization in a very specific economic sense. Would the author's arguments hold true if the term were used in a more general sense?
 - 2. What problems could arise as states lose decision-making powers? Are there ways that this could be beneficial as well?
 - 3. How are globalization and industrialization similar?
 - 4. The author states that contemporary democracy is meant to function at the state level. Is worldwide democracy desirable? Why or why not?

- 5. Is the author's argument based more on facts or opinions? Explain.

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By Melanie Lambrick

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**Record: 1**

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INTERNATIONAL trade  
OFFSHORE assembly industry

**Abstract:** The article provides general information regarding globalization. The author defines the concept as the economic, political, cultural, and environmental connections between international communities. Local and global benefits of international economic integration are discussed and economic, political, cultural, and environmental disruptions are presented. Particular focus is given to offshore operations conducted by multinational corporations and to possible labour and human rights violations.

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## Full Text

### Introduction

The term "globalization" refers to the large-scale partnering of world economies and cultures. Globalization is a controversial concept. Its proponents praise the benefits of an integrated international market where goods, labour, capital, and ideas can flow freely and promote economic development at all levels of society. Critics consider globalization to be a gateway to unbridled capitalism, allowing powerful corporations to displace local enterprises and further widen the gap between the very wealthy and the very poor.

Globalization is a process through which international communities, organizations, corporations, and individuals have become increasingly interconnected through economics, politics, culture, and the earth's environment. It is characterized by increasing the flow of capital, labour, goods, and ideas between societies, and is often defined as the increasing development of a borderless world or "global village." Globalization has spurred both economic development and cultural and political strain, as countries learn to cope with the effects of globalization on their individual countries.

### Understanding the Discussion

**Capital:** Resources used as factors in producing more goods or services.

**Foreign direct investment:** An investment made in a company of a foreign economy.

**Free trade:** A form of international trade wherein countries may exchange goods without restriction or tariffs.

**Goods:** Objects produced, sold, and consumed within an economy.

**Gross domestic product (GDP):** The measurement of the total market value of goods or services produced within a country.

**Labour:** Work accomplished by people.

**Protectionism:** A set of policies and regulations, such as the raising of tariffs or restrictions of certain goods or services, enacted to discourage the importation of foreign goods or services.

**Tariff:** An imposed tax on goods or services exported from or imported into a country.

**World merchandise trade:** The sum of export and import trade carried out between countries of the world.

## History

The historical origins of globalization are widely debated. While some academics posit that it began in modern times, other place its beginnings during the time of the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages, or nineteenth-century maritime trade between European powers and their colonies.

Nonetheless, numerous scholars agree that there have been times throughout history during which domestic policies and politics have conflicted with international economic integration. For example, the twentieth century witnessed a breakdown in the development of a global economy due to the severely protectionist economic policies instituted after the World Wars. During the period between 1913 and 1950, per capita income growth dropped below 1 percent, and international investment also plummeted. Not only were the World Wars severe obstacles to international economic, political, and cultural connectivity between the nations involved, but they also hindered economic development in other nations around the world.

After World War II, newly revitalized industry and new technologies helped generate a boom in both world population and the international economy. The end of the wars and the fall of barriers and tariffs in Europe created a significant increase in the exchange of goods. Global trade nearly tripled between 1980 and 1999. International trade agreements and economic growth in China, India, Mexico, Thailand, and Vietnam laid the groundwork for the global economy. In addition, the creation of international economic organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank and the establishment of multinational alliances such as the European Union (EU) helped accelerate trade and economic cooperation. Through such multinational networks, goods, labour, capital, and ideas now flow at an unprecedented pace and volume from one country to another.

Although the concept of a "global village" has become a reality through technologically powered economic integration, globalization also brings about social, political, economical, cultural, and environmental disruptions.

Globalization creates favourable conditions for the transfer of jobs and industry from developed Western nations to developing countries. This process is referred to as "off-shoring." Jobs and industries are most often transferred to countries with lower production costs, particularly lower employment costs. In developed economies, such as Canada or the United States, production costs are higher because they are bound and influenced by currency rates and minimum-wage requirements. In Canada, wages are further affected by strong unions, such as the Canadian Automobile Workers (CAW) union. In 2016, the hourly minimum wage in China ranged from 9.5 renminbi (approximately C\$1.90) to 19 renminbi (approximately C\$3.80), depending on region, while Canada's hourly minimum wage varied from C\$10.50 in Newfoundland and Labrador to C\$13.00 in Nunavut. While a Canadian company can achieve lower production costs, an increased profit margin, and greater competitiveness by relocating their manufacturing operations to China, other Canadian companies may be forced to close because of their reduced ability to compete. Off-shoring has led to the closure of factories and a widespread elimination of jobs in Western countries.

Developing economies often have poorly enforced or non-existent labour and environmental standards. While this may represent an opportunity to increase profit margins for multinational corporations, anti-globalization activists have accused such corporations of abusing the rights of workers at off-shore operations. Operations with extremely low wages in comparison to developed countries, excessively long hours, and poor or hazardous working conditions are often referred to as "sweatshops."

The often ill-defined labour standards of developing nations have given rise to a considerable amount of labour rights infringements. China's State Administration of Work Safety (SAWS) estimates economic losses of US\$40 billion per year due to occupation-related disease, disorder, infirmity, or death. These occur in part because heavily pollutive industries often choose to off-shore their operations to avoid environmental barriers present in nations such as Canada. In developing markets, polluting companies are often left unchecked by local and federal regulations. Such markets are known as "pollution havens."

Within a technologically powered and economically integrated global market, environmental changes in one location on the planet may have sizable effects in another location. Issues such as climate change and other environmental changes attributed to industry have tied globalization and the environment together.

On November 22, 1999, tens of thousands of protesters rallied in Seattle, Washington, during the first World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in the United States. The WTO is an international organization of 151 member states with the mandate to regulate and liberalize international trade. Activists protested against the impact of free trade on both developing and developed economies, the environment, and human rights. Critics argue that globalization's institutional mainstays, the WTO, World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), are creating a world where capitalism and corporate interests take precedence over human rights and the earth's environment.

Although globalization remains a widely debated concept, few doubt that economic integration and the rise of emerging markets has permanently altered the world's economy and impacted international politics for generations to come. This interconnectedness was demonstrated during the global financial crisis that began in 2008. The collapse in market price of complicated financial products whose values were based on the US real estate market and the uncovering of misleading and corrupt investment schemes at some of the world's largest investment firms negatively impacted the economy of nearly every country in the world, including Canada. While Canada's real estate market is structured quite differently from that of the United States and, as a result, there were far fewer foreclosures, nevertheless, the price of real estate plummeted and the impact on the economy was substantial.

In the effort to save the world's economy from total collapse, government based financial bailouts were implemented on an unprecedented scale. Critics of globalization saw the events of the financial crisis as vindication--proof of the problems inherent in a system of global trade rooted in financial co-dependency. However, proponents of globalization argued that the problems of the financial crisis, once alleviated, will result in a strengthened, more reliable system of global finance and trade that will continue to improve quality of life for everyone.

## **Globalization Today**

The global financial crisis brought to the forefront of public debate the ever-widening worldwide income inequality gap. Globalization, critics contend, allows the world's rich to continue getting richer, while stagnating mobility for the global middle class, and making the poor, working-class populations even poorer. Between 2001 and 2013, the median pay for a Canadian CEO jumped from C\$1.4 million to C\$5.6 million. As further evidence of the shift in economic mobility, investment and personal income growth opportunities were once more readily accessible to the middle class. But in 2010, the top 10 percent of Canadian earners generated 57 percent of investment income.

To support job creation and increase exports, in the 2010s the Canadian government embarked upon an ambitious trade plan, attempting to negotiate free trade agreements

with nearly forty countries. Emerging Asian markets were of particular interest in this plan. As of 2015, four of Canada's eight largest trading partners were Asian nations, but Canada had no free trade agreements in the region prior to the conclusion of the Canadian-Korean Free Trade Agreement (CKFTA) in March 2014. The Canadian government anticipated that the CKFTA would increase Canadian companies' competitiveness in Asia and boost Canada's economy by \$1.7 billion.

In October 2015, Canada and eleven other countries reached agreement on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), an extensive free-trade agreement between Pacific Rim nations. Though the TPP was not without controversy, then-prime minister Stephen Harper touted the partnership as a "once-in-a-lifetime agreement" that would have significant financial benefits for Canada. The countries that were part of the TPP comprise about 40 percent of the world's economy. Once implemented, the TPP was projected to greatly expand Canada's exports of beef, seafood, dairy products, wine, and other goods. The TPP was finalized and signed in February 2016. However, before the agreement could be ratified, US president Barack Obama left office, and his successor, Donald Trump, pulled out of the TPP. The remaining eleven TPP signatories agreed on a revised agreement that was substantially the same, but without the United States. The successor Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP or TPP-11) was signed in March 2018. Though significantly smaller without the United States, the CPTPP countries account for 13.5 percent of world GDP and 15.3 percent of world trade.

Following the so-called Brexit vote of June 2016, in which Great Britain voted by referendum to leave the EU, some feared that growing anti-trade sentiment would complicate Canada's trade relationships--particularly the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the EU, which passed legal review in February 2016 and, as of October of that year, was still undergoing translation in preparation for the approval process. However, British prime minister Theresa May stated at the Group of 20 (G20) summit in September 2016 that her government would continue to support free trade between Canada and the EU, and the various G20 leaders resolved in the final communiqué of the summit to "reject protectionism" in favor of increased global trade. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who took office in November 2015, said in a news conference at the summit that Canadians are unlikely to embrace the protectionist views increasingly seen in the United States and Europe because "Canadians are... generally open and positive and optimistic about the future," according to a Canadian Press article on the CBC News website.

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By Jerome Yip and Sarah Elaine Eaton

Sarah Elaine Eaton holds a PhD in educational leadership and an MA in Spanish from the University of Calgary. She taught languages for twelve years at the post-secondary level. She works as a researcher, consultant, writer and speaker, specializing in languages and literacy.

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Subjects: GLOBALIZATION
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QUALITY of life

Abstract: The article presents an argument for globalization. The author argues that it provides long-term benefits for all involved including prosperity, security, and enrichment. The effects of globalization on international poverty, increased trade, and economic growth are discussed. Particular focus is given to the promotion of international security. It is the author's opinion that globalization benefits people in material, personal, and cultural terms.

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Thesis: Globalization is a beneficial process that has occurred throughout human history because of the positive and long-term benefits it provides, including prosperity, security, and enrichment.

Summary: The process of globalization is best understood as the development of a better life through international cooperation. It transformed North America from an agrarian to an industrial society and is the primary reason why Canadians enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the world. Past or present, globalization is widely recognized as a force for good. It is not a zero-sum game, in which one country gains at the loss of another, but rather globalization is a game in which everyone wins.

Introduction

Simply defined, globalization is the increased cross-border flow of goods, services, people and capital. Economists coined the term in 1962 to describe a process of worldwide integration and increased economic efficiency pioneered by Scandinavian Vikings as early as 1000 CE. The explorer Christopher Columbus is perhaps the most infamous of historical globalizers who, on a mission to discover new trading routes to India, miscalculated in his navigation and landed in the Americas in the fifteenth century. Late twentieth-century expansion in Asian countries, such as China, India, and "Asian Tiger" countries including Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, demonstrates how successful globalization can transform impoverished nations into booming economic metropolises.

Prosperity

Globalization is a proven force for generating prosperity. At the 2000 World Economic Forum, US President Bill Clinton commented on the importance of open markets in worldwide efforts to improve standards of living and build shared prosperity. In fact, only those countries that have opened their economies to international trade, capital flows and

competition have experienced economic progress. Globalization has reduced the number of people living in absolute poverty (defined as less than \$1 per day by the World Bank) by hundreds of millions and brought about a significant decline in rates of child labour.

Trade also promotes growth because it enables a country to develop its resources and its citizens' skills. This in turn permits an increased level of global output at a minimal cost of production, providing access to basic needs such as cheaper food, clothing and shelter. There are many examples of poor people grasping the opportunities provided by trade and technology and bettering their lives, including Mexican farmhands who pick fruit in California, and Bangladeshi seamstresses who make clothes for Europeans. Thirty years ago, South Korea was as poor as Ghana, but trade has helped it grow to become as rich as Portugal as of 2008.

It is in Canada's best interest to increase economic participation and improve living conditions worldwide. It does not make sense for Canada to isolate itself from the rest of the world. This would hinder trading and thus impact both the Canadian and world economy in the long run. Trade that does not concern itself with developing economies promotes inequality and hostility and reverses economic growth. As such, it is the Canadian government's duty to embrace and promote globalization.

Security

A second benefit of globalization is that it promotes security. US President George W. Bush contended that societies open to international commerce are the most open to democracy within their borders. The purpose of a liberal market economy is to civilize the quest for profit and use it as an engine to fuel social progress. Trade creates the habits of freedom that provide security and extend political power. US President Barack Obama has also supported the growth of global trade.

A shift toward democratic ideals has transformed many governments by making them more accountable to their citizens and fostering awareness of human rights. The best examples of this transformation are China and India. Since opening their borders to trade, these countries have seen improved economic conditions and their citizens have gained personal liberties and some leverage to demand more accountability from their governments. It is not only communist and post-colonial countries that have benefited from globalization. During the two decades leading up to 2008, the percentage of countries that moved from autocracies and dictatorships to multi-party elections grew by 30 percent.

The expanding circle of free trade increases security because economic growth establishes a successful middle class with the money and power to exercise its right of choice in both consumer and political arenas. The improved social and economic status of women is an example of how globalization promotes security. Educated women provide an advantage in

a competitive world, as they generally have fewer children than uneducated women and are able to make productive and dramatic improvements to a country's economy and industries. Their spending habits tend to center on investment in education, health, nutrition and family life. Thus, countries that introduce female education experience social progress; while those that exclude women from full societal participation tend to fall behind.

While a country of unskilled labourers cannot expect to transform itself quickly from vulnerability to security overnight, globalization is a certain path toward the goal of security. Working conditions may not be ideal at first, but the profits from this labour can be invested in education and training for longer-term improvements. This will move the country away from labour-intensive manufactures and toward a society of experienced workers able to command higher wages and an enforceable constitution of human rights. The same initiative was necessary for Canada's transition during the Industrial Revolution of the early twentieth century, and historians and citizens today will testify that the difficult yet temporary conditions of the time proved worthwhile.

Enrichment

Globalization enriches the human experience through increased cultural and economic integration, which promotes diversity by opening society to new technology, communication and ideas. Commercial communication between the world's nations brings about a sharing of ideas and exposure to new ways of doing business. Transportation creates opportunities for foreign study, allowing citizens to experience first-hand the civil liberties, living standards and customs of other countries.

As economies become more efficient, the cost of communication decreases. For example, the cost of a three-minute telephone call from New York City to London, England, has decreased from approximately \$300 US in 1930 to less than 10 cents in 2008. This drop in the price of telecommunications has increased opportunity for economic growth and made the benefits of information available to almost everyone.

Moreover, globalization helps to break down discrimination against people on the basis of religious beliefs or race. In fact, globalization has transformed diversity into a value, in-and-of itself. Globalization is not about imposing on or eradicating cultural norms. Instead it is a process by which imported goods and services are adapted to reflect local traditions and needs, sometimes referred to as "glocalization" to reflect the local aspect. A good example of this is McDonald's restaurants. As the corporation expands into different countries, it changes its menu to reflect the adopted culture. For example, there is no beef on the menu in India out of respect for religious practices there.

Mike Moore, then the Director General of the World Trade Organization, said in a 1999 speech, "Nobody is a racist, or an ultra-nationalist, or a protectionist when their child is sick.

They want the best this world has to offer, and why not?" The best world is the one that offers the best possible approach to every issue-globalization is the tool that allows individual countries to develop their unique offerings and share them with the world.

Conclusion

Globalization is about allowing and enabling people to pursue their goals and to realize the best life possible through access to ideas, technology, and people across borders.

Globalization creates prosperity by ensuring efficiency. As explained above, inefficiency is counterproductive in that it allows people to waste their talents and countries to squander their limited resources. Also, globalization promotes security because it creates a middle class with the knowledge, capital and confidence to demand human and civil rights. Finally, globalization is a proven way to enrich the human experience and secure independence through interdependence.

In sum, globalization is good for people in material, personal, and cultural terms, and that is why Canada, a nation of free people, should support it.

Ponder This

1. Based on the author's arguments, would you consider globalization to be primarily a positive or a negative force? Why?

- 2. What are the greatest benefits of a globalized world? Can you think of any drawbacks? If so, what are they?
- 3. Does the author leave out or work around any important issues related to globalization?

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By Jennifer Graham

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