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This month's subject is so huge that it's like trying to pour bath-water into a milk carton. This article should be a book! Nevertheless, here we go.

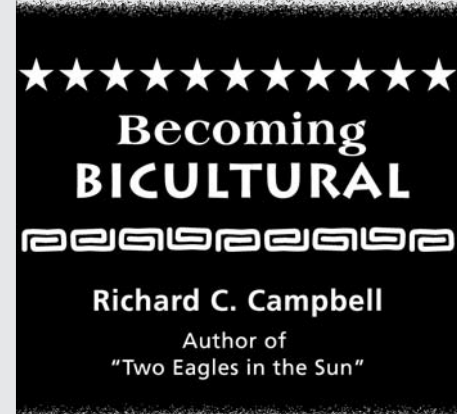
One big word. Think *globalization*. We can define this very complicated term as the network that today comprises a one-world marketplace, with products produced anywhere in the world for export and import. This international network brings together corporations, banking, technology, loans, profits, international finance, governments, labor, management, environmental concerns, working conditions and cultures. To illustrate, in my closets and drawers are items from China (naturally), Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Bulgaria, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Italy, Jamaica, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Dominican Republic. Hardly any are from the U.S. but I would wager that most or all of the foreign-made items were once produced in the U.S. *That's globalization.*

Benefits. On nearly any issue, two sides emerge, especially if the issue is convoluted. First, the benefits: similarity of economic interests worldwide, higher production efficiency, more product variety, lower prices, increased investments, wider sharing of technology and instantaneous movement of money around the world. Last of all, healthy corporate profits make happy CEOs, mostly through cheap labor.

Problems. The disadvantages: unjust corporate influence over developing countries, upsets in traditional cultures, damage to the environment (filthy air in China pollutes air even in the U.S.), worker sweatshops (Apple in China, Nike, clothing industry mostly in Asia but also in Los Angeles), secret agreements by invisible bureaucrats that can trump national laws, danger of international crises (Greece, the Euro) when any single national economy collapses, increased global drug traffic with surge of crime and violence, and hefty corporate profits but only a trickle for the people. Instead of globalization raising all boats, too often it lifts all yachts (William Coffin).

A sad story. Consider industrial production with wages and benefits that once made America's economy the envy of the world. But now view that image shrunk to many abandoned, rusty factory buildings, long unemployment lines and today's labor fighting for its rights. Powerful corporations close factories, dismiss workers, move abroad and leave impoverished communities behind. What about corporations that avoid collapse with federal bailouts, then turn around and spend their profits abroad? What about industrial closures that increase unemployment while job losses ripple along the entire chain of suppliers? What about when unemployment assistance ends and we see demoralized families, hungry children, and sometimes family break-ups? What about lower tax income that forces governments to face huge shortfalls, cut personnel, and swell unemployment rolls?

Especially egregious are those corpo-



Becoming BICULTURAL

Richard C. Campbell
 Author of
 "Two Eagles in the Sun"

One world's win or woe?

rations that move businesses and finances abroad only to use tricks to evade taxes *to their own country!* Now the final irony: Recent studies have revealed that many such transferred products often can now be produced in this country at less or only slightly more cost, particularly as companies consider moving back to the U.S. because of rising shipping expenses. Where are the socially concerned corporate stockholders in this tangle?

Hispanics. Now let's finally but all-too-briefly come to Hispanics. Whirlpool washers made in Germany. Microwave ovens in Sweden, China, and Oklahoma. U.S. refrigerators in Brazil. Walmart vegetables from Brazil, customer service responders from India. Some cameras designed and developed in the U.S., made in China, imported back to the U.S. Supposing those jobs come back home, how many of those once-American jobs would be open for Hispanics and others, both skilled and unskilled?

Despite the impact of 50 million Hispanics/Latinos who form the second largest consumer group in the U.S., Hispanic unemployment still hovers at 13.2 million. That means *one in four* Hispanics unemployed. In fact, since the 1980s when globalization began to spread so rapidly and particularly since 2000, Hispanic family assets have shrunk 66 percent. Poverty continues and worsens in barrios across the country, and children suffer most.

Wrap-up. If we have tried to pour a few drops of a humongous, unruly topic into a milk carton, we hope some of that water makes its way into the carton. In which case, maybe, just maybe, enough drops spill inside to make this complexity a tad clearer. Certainly, what *is* clear, we can assume globalization is here to stay, whether for better or worse. As one expert expressed it, you can't back up Niagara Falls. In general, globalization probably is more positive than negative, or perhaps a toss-up. Yet, if the global economy comes apart, who knows what happens to globalization or anything else! Unfortunately, no one has a crystal ball into our foggy global future. We'll just have to wait to see.

Richard Campbell is the author of "Two Eagles in the Sun: A Guide to U.S. Hispanic Culture."

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