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Manitoulin Pow-wow

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A boriginal Canadians are very much in the public eye these days. Many people think it's about time. The native Indians have long been victims of systemic racism, social injustice and cultural genocide.

At a time when the governments of Canada and the United States have condemned the South African government for its policies of apartheid, they themselves are guilty of similar transgressions. Fault is continually attributed to previous governments and not much else gets done.

Although some people agree that aboriginal Canadians have been unfairly treated, especially in land issues, there are many who believe the Indians should not have resorted to civil disobedience. In Quebec, tactics such as the use of guns and blockades to defend Indian land claims have been called terrorism. Some Quebec residents have burned effigies of Indians. And now the province has asked the army to smash the natives' barricades. One person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter.

From August 4 to 6, native North Americans from all over Canada and

the United States held their annual pow-wow on Manitoulin Island. The weekend was filled with rich cultural festivities, the main attraction being the ritual dancing. Spanning age from children to seniors, male and female dancers put forward their best in friendly competition.

A resurgence of pride in their native culture was evident in even the youngest faces. By participating directly in their heritage, these children will carry on the legacy of their culture and people. They are indeed the future; a remedy for cultural assimilation.