

## CONFLICTS DIVIDE NATIONS

*As you read this section in your textbook, fill in the flowchart below to help you recognize the sequence of events that took place in Northern Ireland, Chechnya, and Yugoslavia.*

## Sequence of Conflicts

## CHAPTER

## 32

## SECTION 1

## Section Summary

## CONFLICTS DIVIDE NATIONS

In recent decades, many wars and conflicts have arisen over ethnic differences. For example, in Sri Lanka, Sinhalese Buddhists are the majority. Sinhalese nationalists forbade the use of the Tamil language and made Sinhalese the official language. This and other policies led to a civil war between the Buddhists and Tamils. Tamils agreed to a ceasefire when the government agreed to negotiations over a separate Tamil government.

In some countries, however, conflicts have been peacefully resolved. In Canada the democratic government helped prevent French-speaking Quebec from seeking independence.

**Northern Ireland** was the scene of another long-term conflict. In 1922 the Protestant majority in six northern counties voted to remain part of Britain when Ireland became independent. However, many Catholics in those counties wanted to join with Ireland, which has a Catholic majority. Beginning in the 1960s, extremists on both sides turned to violence. Peace talks dragged on for years. Finally, in 1998, Protestants and Catholics signed the **Good Friday Agreement**, a peace accord.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, many minorities in several former republics wanted independence. For example, ethnic Armenians fought for freedom against Azerbaijanis. The fiercest struggle occurred in **Chechnya**, where Muslim Chechen nationalists fought to free Chechnya from Russian control. Russia crushed a Chechen revolt in the mid-1990s. As a result, many civilians were killed. When a 1997 peace treaty failed, some Chechens turned to terrorism.

Ethnic tensions also tore Yugoslavia apart during the 1990s. Before 1991, Yugoslavia was a **multiethnic**, communist country. The Serbs dominated Yugoslavia, which was controlled by the Communist Party. The fall of communism resulted in nationalist unrest and fighting between Serbs and Croats in Croatia. Soon the fighting spread to neighboring Bosnia. During the war, all sides committed atrocities. In Bosnia, the Serbs conducted a vicious campaign of **ethnic cleansing**. In 1995, the war in Bosnia ended. Then, however, another crisis broke out in the Serbian province of **Kosovo**. In 1989 Serbian president **Slobodan Milosevic** began oppressing Kosovar Albanians. Ten years later, NATO launched air strikes against Serbia. UN and NATO forces eventually restored peace.

## Review Questions

1 What two groups are in conflict in Sri Lanka?

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2 Why did Chechnya become an area of conflict in Russia?

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## READING CHECK

In which country did ethnic tensions not lead to war?

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## VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does *dominated* mean in the underlined sentence? What clues can you find in the surrounding words, phrases, or sentences? Use these context clues to help you figure out what *dominated* means.

## READING SKILL

**Recognize Sequence** What happened in Ireland after independence to cause conflict?

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