price that will allow for the expected rate of profit. Particularly, the workers who have had to undergo a lowering of their wages because of the frantic actions of the capitalists to stop the falling rate of profit find themselves in a situation where, because of lack of money, they aren't able to buy the consumer goods that they had produced which now belong to the capitalists.

Capitalists make use of certain methods which risk further lowering the rate of profit in order to slow down the crisis and to get rid of stock. For example, for several years now, the capitalist States have started up several programs such as the development of public investment, particularly in the form of suborganizations, such as the increasing of advertising and credits, and such as the producing of arms. In doing so, the bourgeois States were able to slow down the eruption of the crisis which elsewhere, as we see today, finally only magnifies itself to become nearly permanent!

Therefore, the time will come when the crisis is inevitable and violent. The crisis is the mechanism by which a depreciation of social capital is able to occur and a severe lowering of the value of labor-power. The crisis involves an overproduction of certain stock (commodities), a lowering of production, and the bankruptcy of the weakest capitalists. Also, for the workers and the people in general it is misery, unemployment, intensifying work-load, lowering of the real salary. The strongest capitalist will be able to buy companies which are bankrupt or in difficulty at a price lower than their value. This allows these huge capitalists to realize a profit from the depreciation which is the forced lowering of the value of the constant capital owned by the whole capitalist class. This in turn causes the temporary lowering of the organic composition of capital. Unemployment lowers the salaries. Several capitalists will come out of the crisis with some technical innovations which will supply them with a temporary surplus-profit. Summing it up, at the end of the crisis, there will definitely be a depreciation of existing capital and a steadying of the profit rate. The people will come out of it poorer, a considerable amount of commodities and of productive forces will have been sacrificed for profit, while several large capitalists will have strengthened their position. All is set for the preparation of the next crisis...

To overcome the crisis, eliminate capitalism itself

Yes, crises are inevitable! That's the only conclusion that can be formed through the use of a scientific, Marxist-Leninist analysis of the system of capitalist exploitation. Crises are the evidence of the internal contradiction of capitalism, they are also a chance for the bourgeoisie, and particularly for its monopolist sector, to better exploit and oppress the working class and the people in general. Therefore, it's principally the working class who suffers from the capitalist crisis. And because of this, the working class has to undertake the historical task of leading the people towards a proletarian revolution and the permanent elimination of the capitalist crisis.

TO OVERCOME CAPITALISM, DOWN WITH CAPITALISM ITSELF!
For years a national movement has existed in Quebec. And as the waves come and go, this movement has more or less gained in force following the sinuous transformations of the class struggle in Canada. To admit the existence of a national movement in Quebec is also to admit the reality of the oppression that the Quebec nation has to endure. Considering the conditions of the development of capitalism in our country, this oppression, under the disguise of federalism, could only serve the Canadian bourgeoisie and American imperialism 100%. The division of the Canadian people and the super-exploitation of the Quebec proletariat by Noranda Mines, John-Mansville, Dominion Textile, Firestone, Gypsum or United Aircraft, are the consequences of the oppression of the Quebec nation on the whole Canadian proletariat.

As throughout the country the resistance of the proletarian and Canadian people wins victories against the crisis measures of the bourgeoisie, the national question becomes most important. Today more than ever, bourgeois nationalists of all kinds are busy dividing the French-speaking proletariat from its English-speaking brothers though both face the same enemies in their struggle. To counter the various schemes of the bourgeoisie nationalists, the Canadian proletariat needs a clearcut strategy which recognizes both the necessity of the struggle against national oppression and that of its close link with the struggle for socialism in Canada. To do this, we must refer to the Marxist-Leninist principles on the question, principles enriched by more than 100 years of experience in advanced capitalist countries as well as in formerly exploited and oppressed nations such as China and Vietnam. But our goal must be to apply these principles to the concrete Canadian situation. In this way, we must unite the legitimate demands of the Quebec nation to those of the whole Canadian proletariat. These are the objectives of the present pamphlet.

I - Marxist-Leninist principles on the national question

Being the scientific theory of the revolutionary proletariat, Marxism-Leninism makes a correct analysis of national oppression and the struggle against it. The basic principle of any correct position on the question is the following: all nations are equal in right. If all nations have the right to dispose of themselves; they have the right to self-determination. Self-determination, in Lenin’s own words, is “exclusively the right to independence in the political sense, the right to political separation from the oppressor nation” (1). In other words, this means actual and concrete recognition of the right of nations to dispose of themselves, recognition of the right of oppressed nations to establish their own independent State, without outside interference. The demand for self-determination is a demand of oppressed nations to be free, to determine their own social system and their own future.

Historically, this demand was first put forward by the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie of the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries in the course of the struggle of developing capitalism against the crumbling feudal system. Practically this gave the right to nations to secede from the feudal empires which dominated them, in order to establish their own nation-states. These nation-states were necessary to the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie for the creation of interior markets and for their domination of the developing proletariat.

Later, when capitalism changed from a progressive force into an obstacle to social progress, the proletariat picked up the banner of this demand. A new revolutionary force, it adapted this demand to the conditions of the development of capitalism in its ultimate stage: imperialism. Having reached this stage, capitalism has stepped beyond the limits of the nation-state in many countries and has replaced competition by monopoly. In its imperialist stage, capitalism sharpens class contradictions, develops militarism, multiplies wars, reinforces reaction, spreads its tentacles to the four corners of the world and ransacks the wealth of weaker and less-developed countries, the colonies.

The proletariat picks up the demand for self-determination

Indeed, the outcome of the imperialist First World War caused the explosion of the world into two factions in opposition with one another. On the one hand, a bunch of “advanced” capitalistic countries, imperialist countries, who had just divided the world between themselves in the worst butchery humanity has only known, on the other hand stood a majority of dependent and colonized countries whose most elementary rights were ignored and who had to struggle to shed the imperialist yoke. It is in this context that the leaders of the revolutionary proletariat, of whom Lenin was then the most illustrious figure, elaborated the proletarian viewpoint on the national question with that of the right of the colonies to freedom.

“...the national question was thereby transformed from a particular and internal State problem into a general and international problem, into a world problem of emancipating the oppressed peoples in the dependent countries and colonies from the yoke of imperialism” (2). Thus, under the conditions of imperialism, the right of self-determination was broadened to mean the right of the oppressed peoples of the colonies and dependent countries to complete secession and independence from their imperialist oppressors. In this way, the struggle for freedom of the colonial peoples joined the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against a common enemy: imperialism. The question of national rights wasn’t isolated anymore for it became an integral part of the general question of proletarian revolution. Therefore it was the common interests of the proletarian movement in the imperialist countries and the national liberation movement in the colonies that sealed their indissolubly unity against the world-wide forces of reaction.

But Lenin also remarked that during capitalism’s ultimate decadent stage, its imperialist stage, “the national question can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of the proletarian revolution” (3). In other words, this means that during the imperialist stage, the national question can only be and must be resolved in a perspective of class struggle, that is to say, in the highest interests of the proletariat. Therefore it was the common interests of the proletariat, the proletariat’s struggle for freedom. Contrary to the blatant lies of the bourgeois ideologists, the proletariat never refuses to lead the struggle against national oppression, in the same way it leads any demand only when it weakens its principal enemy and helps its struggle advance towards its final goal: socialism. The practical consequence of such a position is that the proletariat does not support a national movement on the simple basis that it is a national movement, but clearly stated that we must not consider the support of national movements from an abstract and formal point of view: “This does not mean, of course, that the proletariat must support every national movement, everywhere and always, in every individual and concrete case. It means that support must be given to such national movements as tend to weaken, to overthrow imperialism, and not to strengthen and preserve it” (4).

Therefore, a national movement is supported by the proletariat only when it serves to advance the proletarian revolution. For in our times, the proletarian revolution is the only one capable of offering the conditions of not only formal but true equality between nations. Only this revolution can lead to the very disappearance of nations. However, this will be accomplished only with the arrival of communism, that is, with the disappearance of class struggle. Communism, which is the ultimate goal of the actions of the re-

A demand to be resolved by revolution
Socialism, transitional stage on the road to the disappearance of nations

An essential condition to the transition to the revolutionary proletariat, will permit the fusion of nations and will permit the disappearance of nations and the fixing of boundaries of the State by the agreement of the people. It is in this way, that frictions and distrust between nations will disappear, that reconciliation will be accelerated, and that the union of nations leading to the extinction of the State will be possible.

As Stalin says; "Because communism knows that the union of peoples in a single world economic system is possible only on the bases of mutual confidence and voluntary agreement, and that the road to the formation of a voluntary union of the peoples lies through the separation of the colonies from the "integral" imperialist "whole", through the transformation of the colonies into independent states." (6)

That is to say that socialism, the transitional stage of the dictatorship of the proletariat leading to the abolition of classes, is also the transition stage, on the road towards the amalgamation of nations and the disappearance of nation-states.

Indeed, the State of the dictatorship of the proletariat, "A State a hundred times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois State," (Lenin) explicitly supports, not only the right of self-determination of all the nations within it; but also the right of each of them to separate. Under a socialist regime, the national problem is solved either by the freely arrived at continuation of the existing arrangement of a federation of nations within a national framework; or by pure and simple separation. But in both cases, this implies the total liberty of propaganda in favour of separation; and the solution of this problem by way of a referendum within the nation wishing to separate.

Furthermore, for the nations that prefer not to separate, the socialist State favours regional autonomy in order to guarantee equality as well as the full development of the rights of all the nations concerned. Moreover, it protects the rights of the dispersed minorities, for whom regional autonomy cannot be realized, by assuring them full national equality and by abolishing all national privileges.

In the Soviet Union, at the time of Lenin and Stalin when the country was still socialist, and in China today, the communists have successfully waged the struggle for equality between nations. In both cases, the great majority of nations and oppressed national minorities have been joined together in a centralized State, thus creating the conditions to heighten and strengthen the unity and internationalism of the entire working class.

However, in both these countries, the fight for equality between the nations did not stop with their federation into a centralized State. Regional autonomy became a reality in order to insure an authentic equality between the nations in the respect of their language, of their life, of their culture and of their economic development. In this way, the application of the two principles — the right to self-determination and regional autonomy is the real solution to the national problem in a bi-national or multi-national socialist State.

In order to guarantee a just solution to the national question, as with all other questions, Marxism-Leninism teaches that there can be only one vanguard party of the working class. This party must reflect the unity of the working class against national oppression both politically and organizationally. Indeed, it must undertake to promote and realize the complete equality of the workers of the oppressed nation with those of the oppressor nation. If not, it is impossible for the proletariat to uphold a political line independent from the bourgeoisie's.

On this point Stalin was most clear: "We still have to settle the question of how to organize the proletariat of the various nations into a single, common party. One plan is that the workers should be organized according to nationality — so many nations, so many parties. This plan was rejected by the Social-Democrats (communists—in STRUGGLE!). Experience has shown that the organization of the proletariat of a given State according to nationality only leads to the downfall of the idea of class solidarity. All the proletarian members of all the nations in a given State must be organized in a single, indivisible proletarian collective." (6)

II—The national situation in Canada

Canada is a bi-national country; the English Canadian nation constitutes the majority and the Quebec nation, the minority. Quebec is a definite nation. Remember the characteristics as defined by Stalin: "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make up manifested in a common culture" (6)

It is impossible to deny that Quebec is a definite community which was formed through its own particular history, with its own language and territory, and with its own particular psyche. All these factors contributed to give Quebec its own distinctive culture. Because of Quebec's atrophied economy, compared to Ontario for example, and its great dependence on American imperialism, the characteristic concerning the economic life of the community might perhaps seem blurred. However, as Stalin pointed out, nations are complex and concrete historically-recognized facts, and not "pure" and simple abstract nations established once and for all time. In fact, a nation, like the rest of reality, is in motion and is subject to the laws of transformation; it has a history, a beginning, and an end. Besides, there is no single distinguishing characteristic of a nation. In comparing nations to each other, one finds here one feature standing out, and there another. Thus it is precisely the concrete conditions of Quebec's national development, and the oppressed situation which so characterized that development, which explain why the economic life of the community could not develop in the same way as the other characteristics.

If it is easy to prove the existence of the Quebec nation, it is more difficult to date its origins. However, there is one thing about its history that is certain: the British Conquest quickly transformed the somewhat confused feeling of national belonging that already existed at the time among the people of New France, into a genuine national consciousness. From 1760 on, the nascent French Canadian nation was subject, by force of arms, to direct foreign domination in the interests of the British Empire. This foreign domination served to weld together the different classes of the French Canadian nation, with the exception of the traders — the feudal land-
An inconsequent national struggle

But the French-Canadian nation's struggle was never carried to its successful conclusion. Why? Because when this struggle reached its peak in the form of violent and armed resistance against the invaders in 1837-38, it was under the inconsequent leadership of the liberal petty-bourgeoisie. This petty-bourgeoisie, who had joined the ranks of a similar liberal petty-bourgeoisie in Upper-Canada (Ontario), had managed, for a while, to rally all the strata of the French-Canadian people. But its political and economic weakness, its lack of homogeneity, prevented it from bringing its national liberation project to term.

The only class having enough strength and homogeneity to lead this struggle successfully would have been the industrial bourgeoisie, representative of a new mode of production seeking expansion at the time. But this bourgeoisie in Quebec was far too weak to be able to assume leadership of the struggle precisely because its development was hindered by the dominant feudal and colonial relations of the time. And just at the moment when the Quebec bourgeoisie would have been able to take the leadership of the national movement, the British Empire, under popular pressure, granted political independence to Canada while maintaining it under its economic dependence. Being able to accede to political power by collaborating with the British Empire, the Quebec industrial bourgeoisie, already completely integrated into the English-Canadian bourgeoisie, didn't lose time in rejecting the anti-colonial classes and in betraying the French-Canadian national interests.

By this fact, the foundation of bourgeois democracy in Quebec as in the rest of Canada and the creation of a national independent State, through the Confederation of 1867, was to be the most anti-democratic act ever. Indeed, this project was carried out by totally ignoring the right of the French-Canadian national to self-determination, by forcing the French-Canadian people to join in a federation that it had neither wished nor supported. In this manner the Canadian bourgeoisie set up the bases of its current power: by expropriating by force the Native and Inuit peoples, and the Metis people in the West, and by butchering the Quebec people's struggle against confiscation and participation in the 1914-1918 imperialist war and by denying the political and cultural rights of the Quebec nation.

Nowadays, the Quebec nation is still oppressed and dominated. But this oppression is more refined: it is now exercised in the framework of a bourgeois democratic regime which has reached its imperialist stage. Indeed, the Canadian bourgeoisie, including its Quebec section, has realized the concentration of capital and production into monopolies, has managed the fusion of banking and industrial capital in the hands of a financial oligarchy which controls the main levers of the Canadian economy and exports capital to several regions of the world. In this sense the oppression exerted upon the Quebec nation is by no means comparable to colonial oppression, as the "CP(M-L) would have us believe. In their caricatural opportunism, they are ready to support any liberation movement which may rise in Quebec.

It is the development of capitalism which presides over the development of national oppression in our country. Consequently, the only way to rid ourselves of national oppression at the moment is to rid ourselves of capitalism itself.

It is here that the reactionary character of PQ-style nationalism reveals itself. This bourgeoisie party wants to turn back the clock of history by hoping to finish off, more than a century later, what the Patriots failed to achieve in 1837-38; the creation of a Quebec bourgeois democratic State.

The PQ's project is to install a French-Canadian bourgeoisie at the head of this State of bourgeois dictatorship and to drive out the English-Canadian elements of the bourgeoisie who rule the Quebec economy. In this way, the Quebec middle bourgeoisie would, again, access the monopolist sector that it represents, would see itself suddenly propelled to the point of a national bourgeoisie capable of directly commanding the sale of our natural resources and of national imperialism.

This project is reactionary from A to Z because Canada, including Quebec, has long been an "advanced" bourgeois democratic society where capitalism has reached its imperialist stage. This implies that in our country the bourgeoisie has definitely outlived its historical revolutionary role and that from now on it is a decadent and declining class, 100% reactionary. To say that the bourgeoisie has outlived its historical role, is to state that bourgeois nationalism is lagging behind history, that it is essentially a reactionary ideology and that consequently it can in any way serve the proletariat in its revolutionary struggle for power.

With the deepening of the capitalist crisis, the oppression of the Quebec nation hasn't decreased an inch. The Quebec economy remains completely marked by the overwhelming space occupied by the English-Canadian bourgeoisie space which it shares with American imperialism. In another way, certain democratic rights, such as the right to one's language and culture are constantly abused in daily practice, and this despite the different laws designed to protect public interests, such as the sickenng Bills 63 and 22, supposed protectors of the "cultural" rights of the Quebec nation. And the people, among them the proletariat, are always the ones hardest hit by the negation of these national rights. Particularly in the case of the proletariat, the situation of national oppression means harder working conditions, lower salaries, a greater number of factory and mine shut-downs, etc. Take salaries for example, the discriminatory situation of the Quebec proletariat compared to the situation of the English-speaking proletariat from other provinces is easy to measure: in 1973, the average hourly wage in Quebec was $3.35 compared to $4.06 in Ontario, $3.45 in Manitoba, $3.94 in Saskatchewan, $4.11 in Alberta and $4.91 in British Columbia. In addition to being submitted to a capitalist super-exploitation in the shops and mines, the Quebec proletariat must furthermore endure the fact that it cannot work in its own language.

III. Our tasks regarding national oppression

Facing the situation of national oppression which prevails in our country, what should be the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat? First of all, the right of the Quebec nation to self-determination must not only be recognized in words but a struggle must be waged for its effective recognition. This means an offensive struggle on the part of the working class, especially the Quebec proletariat, against the domination of the English-Canadian exploiter nation of the Quebec nation. Moreover, this also means to openly recognize and defend the glorious struggle of this nation for the acceptance of its democratic rights.

As well, we must work to convince the whole Quebec people that it is not in its interests to struggle for the creation of an independent Quebec national State. We must convince it that it must aim at developing the unity of all the Canadian people around the national oppression, an ever-present reality
proletariat in order to get closer to the socialist revolution. Indeed, if socialist revolution is the only way, considering the stage our country has reached in capitalist development, to unite the necessary conditions to put a definite end to Quebec's national oppression, we must always keep in mind the following question when we examine the national question: in the present situation does the advent of the Quebec nation's independence favor or not the advent of socialism in our country? We must therefore examine the question from the viewpoint of the revolutionary interests of the whole Canadian proletariat. Now, we believe that at the present time, any national movement aiming at the creation of an independent Quebec State reinforces the slightest desire of control and seizure of the Quebec economy by American imperialism, since the movement contributes to the division and thereby to the weakening of the Canadian proletariat and Canadian people.

From this follows two specific tasks, one concerning the Quebec proletariat and the other concerning the English-Canadian proletariat. Concerning the Quebec proletariat, it is important for it to fight without interruption the narrow chauvinism spread into its ranks by bourgeois nationalists and other reactionary such as the Trotskyists who repeat the same nonsense under a revolutionary mask. On the contrary, the Quebec proletariat must demand with all its strength the complete unity of the two nations. Only in this way will the Quebec proletariat be able to definitely separate itself from "right-wing" and "left-wing" bourgeois nationalism, obstacles to any real progress on the road to socialist revolution in Canada.

Regarding the English-Canadian proletariat, it will have to struggle without fail against its big nation chauvinism that the NDP and the revisionists of the so-called Communist Party of Canada, they who have never recognized the right of the Quebec nation to organize itself as it sees fit, have for years spread in its ranks. So, if the Canadian bourgeoisie tries to intensify its repression of the Quebec nation's democratic rights, the Canadian proletariat will be able to counter the bourgeoisie's reactionary policy.

Finally, the immediate task, which is a prerequisite to the accomplishment of all the others, is the struggle for the construction of a real, single and centralized proletarian Party (Marxist-Leninist), indispensable instrument for the accomplishment of the revolution in our country. This party will defend thoroughly the right to self-determination of Quebec, and also its cultural, political and economic rights. This Party will be a bi-national Party, composed of representatives of the vanguard of the whole Canadian working class, from coast to coast. For if the Canadian proletarian Party does not succeed in achieving the unity of the vanguard of the whole proletariat in its own ranks, how will it be able to educate the whole of the Canadian proletariat and people in a real internationalist and socialist spirit? How will it be able to convince the two nations that socialism is the key to the correct solution of the national question? No, the highest unity of the Canadian proletariat, in its sole vanguard Party is the prerequisite for the achievement of the unity of the whole Canadian people, unity which is indispensable to defeat the bourgeoisie and to set up the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(3) Ibid. p. 144.
(5) LENIN, On the national and colonial questions (our translation I.S.I)
(6) STALIN, Marxism and the National Question, Works, Volume 2, p. 307
(7) LENIN, On the national and colonial questions (our translation I.S.I)
(8) Ibid. p. 147
(9) Ibid. p. 142

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(2) STALIN, "Foundations of Leninism", Works, Vol. 6, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow 1953, p. 144
(3) Ibid. p. 144.
(4) Ibid. p. 147
(5) Ibid. p. 192
(7) LENIN, On the national and colonial questions (our translation I.S.I)
(8) STALIN, Marxism and the National Question, Works, Volume 2, p. 307

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