

considering that this comrade wasn't a member of the leading element in the Collective. It is true that the comrade had officially been a member, as a leader-in-training, of the "leadership unit" of the Collective prior to the Mini-Cultural Revolution. The fact, though, is that this "leadership unit" was no longer a functional group. Even when it was functional, it rarely met and decisions in the Collective were made independently by the leading element. This set-up suited Edward Pickersgill just fine because it allowed him to act with greater spontaneity.

A correct criticism of this comrade would have been that, as a member of the "leadership unit", he failed to insist that it continue to fulfill the responsibilities given to it by the Collective. This criticism would have been right on the mark. Criticisms could also have been made on the comrade's lack of revolutionary drive in developing his leadership abilities. These criticisms, however, would have been secondary to the fact that the comrade had no revolutionary form in which to develop his leadership abilities.

The actual charges levelled by Edward Pickersgill did not reflect the reality of the situation in the Collective. Edward Pickersgill accused the comrade of "abandoning leadership" and, in so doing, becoming "the leading liberal-capitulationist in the Collective". This charge was but a smokescreen for Edward Pickersgill's own abandonment of leadership.

It was Edward Pickersgill who had capitulated to the bourgeois ideology. It was he who abandoned the Collective's anti-imperialist political line in search of selfish individual gain. Edward Pickersgill attacked this comrade as part of a deliberate scheme to keep the focus off himself.

THE TRUE ROLE OF CRITICISM IS THAT OF "CURING THE SICKNESS TO SAVE THE PATIENT"

Under such brutal criticism there was no opportunity for comrades to actually learn from the criticism and grasp its content. The harsh and brutal style completely overshadowed the content of the criticism. Frightened by the ferocity of the attack comrades would often simply agree with everything this petty tyrant said in order to try to effect a "ceasefire".

Edward Pickersgill very rarely gave light criticism. He was a master at turning molehills into mountains. When a small point needed to be made to a comrade and a couple of minutes exchange would have sufficed, this petty tyrant launched a major attack. Where a person to person talk would do, he drew in a number of the other comrades not to participate but to observe. In this way each tiny point of criticism became a major disruptive force in the political work because so many comrades were dragged into long

hours of struggle. Long hours of struggle waged simply for the sake of struggle.

Edward Pickersgill gave rise to the illusion that there could be no light criticism in the Alive Production Collective. This did not stop comrades from making light criticisms of each other. It did mean, however, that when comrades were caught doing this by the petty despot they were labelled as "liberals" attempting to "smooth over troubled waters".

Because of the atmosphere of fear and paranoia created by Edward Pickersgill, criticism became a process which comrades dreaded. When comrades were criticized, other comrades would remain silent, hoping to avoid being drawn into the hysteria. Disunity was promoted in the Collective.

Following criticism it is necessary for the criticized comrade to feel the warmth and support of the other comrades and of the organization as a whole. Without this warmth and support the criticized comrade feels isolated and despised. Under these conditions criticism leads to gloom and hopelessness rather than to a feeling of new life and vitality, a new determination to rectify the mistakes.

Under the atmosphere created by Edward Pickersgill, the warmth and support needed by erring comrades could not flourish. When comrades did venture to give support to a comrade under fire, the petty despot would take this as a cue to launch a major personal attack against the supporter. He never hesitated to raise every contradiction, whether it was real or unreal, to a point of principle so that comrades were kept busy "watching their asses" in order to avoid long hours of pointless struggle.

Under an atmosphere of light criticism, it is easier to learn to accept as well as to give criticism; it is possible to feel uplifted and enthusiastic that comrades are helping to root out rotten political lines. In this struggle the conditions are created to give and to accept more weighty criticism whenever it is warranted.

Edward Pickersgill wasn't concerned with creating a revolutionary atmosphere. He was primarily interested in promoting a position of personal gain for himself as a "revolutionary" leader. His use of criticism reflected this. His method of criticism was fundamentally opposed to a Marxist-Leninist method. Mao Zedong outlined the correct method of criticism in his essay "Rectify The Party's Style Of Work": "But our aim in exposing errors and criticizing shortcomings, like that of a doctor curing a sickness, is solely to save the patient and not to doctor him to death.... We can never succeed if we just let ourselves go and lash out at him. In treating an ideological or a political malady, one must never be rough and rash but must adopt the approach of 'curing the sickness to save the patient', which is the only correct and effective method."

PART EIGHT

Edward Pickersgill Blocked New Developments

SETTING THE SCENE TO STEAL SOME COMRADES' MONEY

In February, 1978, two Collective members applied to become a part of the collectivized finance system. They presented a document to the Lu Hsun Unit asking that the Collective make arrangements for this to take place. The document stated in part: "We want to emphasize that this decision is based on sentiment to move the anti-imperialist revolutionary work forward and not on the fact that at some point in the future our income will be insufficient to meet our needs. Our decision comes out of recognition that collectivity within a revolutionary frame is a good thing to be struggled for and upheld, and stems from a desire to better serve the Collective and its anti-imperialist revolutionary work. Also, we are fighting an on-going battle against petty bourgeois ideology and we view collectivizing our finances as a

material expression of our intent to continue this fight. Potentially, it will assist the positive revolutionary side in the struggle." The comrades also presented the Lu Hsun Unit with a full statement on their financial situation.

Edward Pickersgill consciously ignored this initiative, and blocked the people in charge of the collectivized finances from acting upon it. He did so out of straightforward economic self-interest. These comrades' up-to-date financial statement was in his hands and he was in a position to know exactly how much surplus money they would have in the following months. Since the two comrades already donated to the Collective any money they had over and above simple living expenses, Edward Pickersgill knew exactly how much money would be coming his way if he managed to divert the entire surplus into his own pocket. The easiest way he could divert this money was to keep the two comrades on their own financial scheme. This way, there would be no Collective scrutiny

of their finances and Edward Pickersgill would be able to pocket for himself whatever donations they did give to the Collective. This is exactly what happened.

There is an ironic historical twist to this story. Prior to 1977 these comrades had been involved in the collectivized finance system. In January, 1977, Edward Pickersgill suggested that they set up their own financial base in order to give them elbow room to reassess their attitudes towards the Collective. The comrades followed through with Edward Pickersgill's suggestion, and to their surprise found this two-faced dog encouraging other Collective members to criticize them for making this move!

In retrospect it is entirely consistent that Edward Pickersgill orchestrated this split from the collectivized finance system so that he could personally control the two comrades' surplus funds. He established a pattern whereby any donations the two comrades made to the Collective passed directly through his hands and he pocketed for himself the lion's share of all donations these comrades made to the Collective. This situation only ended in August, 1978, after the exposure and demise of Edward Pickersgill.

EDWARD PICKERSGILL DID GET UP ONE MORNING

In 1978, Edward Pickersgill only rarely attended the Collective's 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. work sessions, although in words he was a big supporter of this program.

One morning he showed up at a Collective work area shortly after 7 a.m. Collective members were pleasantly surprised to see him. Edward Pickersgill was silent and had a fierce look on his face; however people put this down to the fact he wasn't used to getting up at that time of the day. They continued with their work as usual.

Shortly after he arrived, Edward Pickersgill launched a verbal attack against a comrade. As it turned out, his sole purpose for being at the Collective work area at such an early hour was to disrupt the work with this fanatical criticism. Other comrades were immediately drawn into the spontaneous criticism session.

One comrade, however, was working in a room on another floor and continued to do so for a number of minutes. After a while he came into the room and found himself in the middle of Edward Pickersgill "holding forth" with his criticisms. He was drawn into the proceedings at once.

Edward Pickersgill criticized him for leaving the main level of the building when he knew that Edward Pickersgill was there. This pompous dog's reactionary line was: "You should have known that something important was up when I arrived."

This is yet another example of Edward Pickersgill's centre of the universe mentality. If a comrade's actions didn't fit in with his perceptions of the world, they were wrong.

In this particular case the comrade was "wrong" on two counts. First, he was "wrong" in even considering the possibility that Edward Pickersgill arrived early in order to do some work. Second, he was "wrong" in not dropping his own work as soon as Edward Pickersgill arrived in order to see what Edward Pickersgill intended to do. Objectively, of course, neither of these "mistakes" are actually mistakes. The comrade was carrying on in an upstanding way with the program he had been involved in for some months. This is what Edward Pickersgill objected to — getting the revolutionary work done.

SCARED OF CONFRONTING THE BAINZITES

On January 14, 1976, a "Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)" goon squad seized control of a meeting of the Wellington County Canada-China Friendship Society. A number of WCCCFs members and Executive members were banned from this meeting and threatened with physical violence. The history of this event is recorded in Part Two of "A History Of The Wellington County Canada-China Friendship Society", published in Alive Magazine, issue number 111.

Edward Pickersgill was a member of the group who confronted

the CPC(M-L) goon squad that evening at the Guelph Public Library. His participation in this event bears careful examination. Alone amongst the WCCCFs members who stood up to the Bainzites, he exhibited great cowardice just before the confrontation. At the last minute he even tried to swing it so that he could stay at home and not go to the Public Library. His cowardly actions are nothing short of criminal!

In the late afternoon of January 14, 1976, a CPC(M-L) messenger delivered an eleven page letter to Edward Pickersgill. Written under the CPC(M-L) letterhead, the letter puts forward the Bainzites' twisted view of Alive's principled opposition to their counter-revolutionary politics. In it the Bainzites slander the Progressive Cultural Club of the University of Guelph by claiming the PCC "passed a Manson-ite" resolution of absolute support for Edward Pickersgill. Of course, no such resolution was passed. The PCC actually passed a resolution lending to Edward Pickersgill its unqualified support in the specific struggle against the Bainzites. The reasons for the support were widely discussed before the resolution was passed.

Most interesting, also, was the fact that the letter ended on a sharp note. The final sentence read, "To you I extend a final warning to cease your reactionary activities."

The letter shook Edward Pickersgill to his foundations. As soon as he had read it he began acting in a cowardly and unpredictable pattern. This wrong pattern noticeably continued throughout the evening.

Here is the long list of facts. Edward Pickersgill refused to let other leading members of the Collective read the letter after he had first read it. He was visibly upset and told people, "They call me a Charlie Manson." When Collective members demanded to read the letter he agreed to read it out to a group of WCCCFs members who were scheduled to gather a few minutes later, before going to the Public Library.

Before its reading, Edward Pickersgill introduced the letter with a few shook-up comments: "This is really heavy", "Are you ready for this one?", "This is the attack we've been waiting for", and "This is very serious. Are you sure you want to hear this before you go to the meeting?"

The letter was read aloud and those present commented on how humorous the twisted Bainzite logic is. Edward Pickersgill, though, remained "deadly serious" and frozen in his tracks.

Two other comrades began leading the meeting and drew up a plan to deal with an expected Bainzite attack on the Friendship Society meeting. The key to the plan was to send an advance party to the Guelph Public Library to do preparatory work for the confrontation. The main group would follow about half an hour behind them.

After the plan was outlined, and every person knew their responsibilities in the operation, the two man advance delegation left for the Public Library. It was made up of the two comrades who had led in the organization and who were skilled in fighting and self-defence tactics.

As the other Friendship Society members waited for the time to leave for the meeting, Edward Pickersgill attempted to get out of participating. He began by haltingly asking the other people, most of whom were not Collective members, "Do you think I should go?"

He whined that his attendance at the meeting could cause the group more trouble than if he didn't go. The WCCCFs members were shocked at this weak-kneed display of cowardice from the person who supposedly had the most advanced political consciousness among them. They forthrightly told him that he should go. In addition, they pointed out that if Edward Pickersgill went to the Alive headquarters and stayed there by himself he would leave himself wide open to a Bainzite attack. The Friendship Society members reasoned that maybe the Public Library meeting was a decoy and the Bainzites were just trying to set up an attack on Alive's offices.

In response to these strong arguments Edward Pickersgill hesitatingly agreed to go. Yet, his actions in attempting to back

down are nothing short of criminal. The plan had been made, and the first group of WCCCFs members was already at the Public Library. Edward Pickersgill, as the leader of the second group, was trying to change the plan at the last minute in order to protect his own skin! This is criminal abandonment of the two people who were already at the Public Library. It is revealing of his true gutlessness.

At the Public Library, Edward Pickersgill acted in a number of strange ways. The most noticeable occurred when a small group of WCCCFs members took the wrong route when exiting from the library. Edward Pickersgill, still in the library, broke into a vile stream of profanity, denouncing this action and the people involved. At the time he verbally abused his friends in this way, Edward Pickersgill was in a group of four comrades which was walking past a squad of six Bainzites. At a moment when it was necessary to be calm and orderly, he broke into an anarchic and useless tirade against this mistake.

Later, when the mistake was pointed out to the people who had made the error by a leading member of the Collective, Edward Pickersgill broke in and said that it wasn't a big point and the people should just forget it. Yet he never did self-criticism for his disruptive hysteria at the time of the mistake.

In the sum-up meeting following the confrontation with the Bainzites Edward Pickersgill also acted like a banana. Again and again he would ask questions like, "Do you think I look like a Charlie Manson?"

Edward Pickersgill's cowardice and eccentric behaviour at this crucial meeting is indicative of his petty bourgeois world view. It is most important to realize that some Friendship Society members only met the editor of Alive and leader of the Alive Production Collective for the first time that evening. His display of individualism, cowardice and personalizing the whole event gave them quite an erroneous first impression of revolutionary leadership! These people who only had contact with the Bainzites through the Society, stood up to this gang of thugs with far greater determination and resolve than this coward. Edward Pickersgill's actions in the incident are rotten to the core!

SUPPRESSION OF INFORMATION ON J.B. McLACHLAN

Alive Magazine, issues 119-122, carried the very popular "Class War In Nova Scotia — A History Of The Cape Breton Miners' Early Struggles". Many readers closely followed this 4 part article and made favourable comments on its clear recounting of these important historical events. Details of the life of J.B. McLachlan, the communist trade union leader who led so many of these struggles, was of particular interest to all who read the articles. McLachlan's 1936 split with the revisionist "Communist Party of Canada" was a key fact which many people enthusiastically asked for more information about.

In researching the article, details on the life of J.B. McLachlan, and particularly his split with the "CPC", were hard to find. We published the article knowing that more research would have to be done into the life of McLachlan because he is such an important figure in the history of the revolutionary movement in Canada.

Following the overthrow of Edward Pickersgill in August, 1978, a most disturbing example of this dog's sabotage of our revolutionary work was uncovered. A supporter told us that at the same time as "Class War In Nova Scotia" was being written, she had been doing independent research into workers' struggles in Nova Scotia. She had told Edward Pickersgill of this fact and had offered to type up some notes on her research. She had also mentioned that she had uncovered a book which provided much interesting information on the life of J.B. McLachlan and particularly on his split from the "CPC". Edward Pickersgill's reply to this was that the research was already being done and there was no need for assistance. Furthermore, he never reported on this exchange to the Collective.

What does this mean? While those people working on "Class War

In Nova Scotia" spent many long hours searching for information and eventually "finished" the article knowing that their research was far from complete, an important source of information was consciously kept from them by Edward Pickersgill. Here was the "editor" of Alive Magazine blocking editorial developments. The man's contempt for our revolutionary work is monumental!

A BAD LINE ON RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Edward Pickersgill was both a saboteur and an idealist on the front of the Alive Production Collective's relations with other revolutionary groups. While, on the one hand, he blocked formal organizational contact with these groups, on the other hand he had dreams of being the "king" of revolutionaries in Canada.

This dialectic is indicative of the bourgeois careerism which was at the core of Edward Pickersgill's practice. He was scared of expanding Alive's work and sphere of influence for fear that his secure leadership "career" would be threatened. At the same time he aspired to hold more power, more fame and more influence. Our relations with a certain revolutionary group reflect this dialectic.

On one occasion we received a letter from a Canadian revolutionary group based in a place quite far away from Southern Ontario. This group has many points of common political outlook with the Alive Production Collective. The group told us that a representative of its organization would be in Southern Ontario and would like to hold discussions with representatives of our organization.

The notice given the Alive Production Collective for this meeting was quite short. However, arrangements were made according to the schedule outlined by the other group. The other group's member arrived in Southern Ontario behind schedule and was unable to meet with us according to the plan we proposed. He then wrote to us and proposed an alternative plan for a meeting.

Edward Pickersgill unequivocally opposed trying to reschedule the meeting. The majority of Collective members had the attitude that we might as well speak to the representative while he was in this part of the country despite the mistakes made by the other group in attempting to organize the meeting. Edward Pickersgill, however, raised the sloppy organizing to the level of principle and used this as an excuse to stop the meeting from taking place. In doing this he consciously sabotaged our attempts to build up friendly external contacts.

At a later point Edward Pickersgill gave indication of his idealism on the question of our relations with this same group. We have never had any meetings with this group. Due to Edward Pickersgill's sabotage, our correspondence has been quite sketchy. Yet this dog, in a conversation with other leading members of the Alive Production Collective, proposed we could build great unity with this group if only we could get them to uproot themselves and move their base to Fergus, Ontario, a place ten miles north of Guelph! What idealistic nonsense! We had no basis of unity with this group on which to make such a suggestion. Furthermore, Fergus is a small city of less than 10,000. Why Fergus for this brilliant idea? All in all, Edward Pickersgill's idea was absurd.

**EDWARD PICKERSGILL FETCHED
AT THE LIQUOR STORE FOR BAINZ**

