

deliberately refused to address any comments towards his target, often proceeding as if the person was simply not present. This growing apprehension led to fear and silence.

The petty tyrant would then jump on the "victim's" silence and non-participation as the starting point for his attack.

These attacks were carefully orchestrated to break the unity among the comrades present. The other comrades were usually willing to simply keep quiet in order to evade the maniac's wrath. They were simply glad to be off the hook. When initial criticisms were given, each of the comrades was made to feel that they were to be the "victim" of the petty tyrant's wrath that day. When they realized another comrade was in fact the day's "victim" a sense of personal relief would divert the comrades' attention from the plight of the actual "victim".

In this way the petty tyrant stifled unity and comradeship in the Collective and removed the possibility of learning from other comrades' mistakes.

Edward Pickersgill's whole vicious program of insulting and intimidating comrades during criticism led many comrades to seriously consider leaving the organization. In face of vile attacks, the comrades would become disorientated and lose all sense of self-worth. Feeling worthless and a hindrance to the organization, they would consider leaving in order to serve the political work of the

organization. What a crime that comrades should be made to feel that they are beneath contempt and worthless in this way!

Each of the comrades in the Collective is precious and should be treated as such. Errors are made, to be sure, but these do not reduce a comrade's contributions to nothing. On the contrary, if they are used to learn new lessons, these mistakes can be used to increase a comrade's contributions greatly.

Whenever his style of criticism was challenged the petty tyrant's ultimate defence was to plead that, "the end justifies the means". This is nonsense. There is no justification for treating comrades like enemies.

The fact is that the "means" used by Edward Pickersgill were unjustified regardless of the end they did or did not achieve. To treat comrades like enemies is wrong. Mao Zedong addresses this point in his essay "Talks At The Yen'an Forum On Literature And Art".

Mao Zedong points out: "To criticize the people's shortcomings is necessary, as we have already said, but in doing so we must truly take the stand of the people and speak out of whole-hearted eagerness to protect and educate them. To treat comrades like enemies is to go over to the stand of the enemy."

This is exactly what Edward Pickersgill has done. He has indeed gone over to the stand of the enemy.

PART SEVEN

Edward Pickersgill Created an Atmosphere of "No Light Criticism"

The purpose of criticism within a political organization is to point out political and organizational mistakes. This process is essential if the organization is to develop and move forward.

We must however take a dialectical and all-sided view of criticism and not dogmatically apply a set formula. When major errors are made, major criticism and examination of the errors is necessary. When minor errors are made, light criticism will often suffice to rectify the error. A minor error which is consistently repeated despite persistent criticism may become a point which requires major criticism in order to root it out.

Edward Pickersgill did not distinguish between criticisms of a minor and a major nature. This petty despot treated all mistakes as if they were of a most serious nature and raised small points to a matter of principle. Any minor error was seen as an excellent excuse to yell and scream at the comrades by this tyrant.

The petty despot also used minor criticisms as an excuse to drag out a comrade's entire life experience. Criticism was never simply restricted to the issue at hand. The erring comrade's whole life was called into question.

Edward Pickersgill's line was that before they joined the Collective all of the comrades had totally negative experiences. He viewed life before joining the Collective as a deep mire of filth and corruption for each of the comrades. He, of course, was an exception to this rule.

This dogmatic line is anti-materialist. If a comrade's experience before joining the Collective was completely negative, where did the spark of rebellion, the desire for change come from? These positive sentiments are necessary before any real political consciousness can be developed.

Comrades who enter the Collective already have a relatively high political consciousness. This consciousness was developed outside the Collective.

It is therefore ridiculous for this anti-materialist to claim that each comrade's life before joining the Collective was a totally negative experience. It was out of these experiences that a desire for change and a spark of revolutionary spirit developed.

The line of "totally negative" is wrong. It is a reflection of a dogmatic and non-dialectical approach to political questions. This

was the line of Edward Pickersgill.

A specific example of this line is the attitude towards collectivizing new members' financial resources. When one new comrade joined the Collective, the first official function he participated in was a discussion with some members of the Collective leadership unit. He was asked if he had any specific questions to ask and he responded with the questions which were on his mind.

Edward Pickersgill had previously requested a report on all this new comrade's financial holdings. When the comrade made this report, Edward Pickersgill asked the comrade which of his financial holdings he was willing to turn over to the Collective. Before the comrade could answer, this petty despot said, with eyes slitted and contempt ringing in his voice, that he would know that the comrade wasn't serious about joining the Collective if he wasn't willing to turn over all his finances for Collective use.

Just before Edward Pickersgill spoke, the comrade had been about to propose a gradual time schedule for turning over his finances which would coincide with the process of him coming to know the Collective work at a more in-depth level. Not wanting to make finances a point of principle which would hold up his integration into the Collective work, the comrade told Edward Pickersgill that he was willing to immediately turn over all his financial holdings to the Collective.

This is a prime example of Edward Pickersgill putting forward an undialectical and opportunistic position towards the process a new comrade must embark on in taking up revolutionary life. Certainly radical rupture is required with what was negative in a new comrade's past life. This radical rupture requires the full and conscious participation of the new comrade; it cannot be coerced into existence under the hegemony of Edward Pickersgill or anybody else. A person subjected to such coercion quite often merely goes through the motions of radical rupture and remains politically unconsolidated. This is why the process of radical rupture cannot be an overnight affair. It must be conducted over a protracted period of time, involving a healthy spirit of criticism/self-criticism/transformation throughout.

However, Edward Pickersgill's motivation was to get the

comrades' money, *not* to get more comrades for the revolutionary work. Consequently he put forward the line of "instant transformation" of a comrade's attitude towards material possessions. Before joining the Collective a person could be a 100% individualist on the financial front. As soon as they joined the Collective they had to be a 100% collectivist on the financial front "or they weren't serious about joining the Collective". Edward Pickersgill's "dialectics" were designed only to fleece new comrades of their money.

The basis on which the petty tyrant would drag a comrade's whole life into question was often exceedingly petty. Perhaps the most petty point on which such an attack was launched was the question of mayonnaise. On this one occasion Edward Pickersgill launched a vicious personal attack on one comrade because he got mayonnaise in his beard at lunchtime.

From this miniscule point the petty tyrant developed a whole thesis outlining how this comrade was alienated from his body to the point where he couldn't guide food to his mouth. This inability to get food into one's gut (or conversely, ability to hoard food in one's beard) came from the comrade's rotten class background.

The campaign went on for weeks. The comrade in question was subjected to attacks each time he got food in his beard at a mealtime. The comrade began to dread mealtimes. If so much as a crumb was spotted by the petty tyrant in this comrade's beard, attacks were launched anew on the comrade's class background. The petty despot would sneer at the comrade, "You have food in your beard again. You should go and look at your face in the mirror and wash out the crumbs." Turning to the other comrades present, Edward Pickersgill would praise his "great" abilities to cut a petty bourgeois down to size.

These types of performances merely succeeded in terrorizing the comrade under fire.

TURNING A LIGHT CRITICISM SESSION INTO A WORD GAME

On December 19, 1977, a comrade presented a letter to Edward Pickersgill. The letter was written on the request of Edward Pickersgill who asked the comrade to comment on the criticism he'd been receiving at that stage of the Mini-Cultural Revolution.

The letter itself is an interesting document. In it the comrade notes that when criticized by Edward Pickersgill, he often thought he was being messed around for no reason at all. "I fell into the illusion that the Collective was making fun of me just for the hell of it," said the comrade. "This is why I turned my anger towards you and not my own reactionary dark side." The comrade also said, "A number of times I thought you were a bastard who deserved a good smash in the face for treating me like such a little kid." Later in the letter he stated, "When I'm pissed off at being made fun of I lose sight of political questions and think in terms of smashing you in the face. These are my indignant petty bourgeois responses to struggle. They stink."

The two main themes in the letter are first, self-criticism for acting like a petty bourgeois in the course of inner-Collective struggle, and second, recognition of a deep rebellion towards Edward Pickersgill's methods of criticism. The comrade's mistake in analysis in the letter was to say that because he acted wrongly when being criticized, this meant that Edward Pickersgill's methods of criticism were entirely correct. The actual fact is that while the comrade made definite mistakes, Edward Pickersgill's cruel and unprincipled method of criticism was a far greater problem in the Alive Production Collective.

This fact was proven in Edward Pickersgill's response to the letter. At a Collective meeting he read the letter out loud and then asked for people's comments on it. The comments given mainly supported the comrade's self-critical spirit but made a few minor points of criticism. Edward Pickersgill then launched into a sentence by sentence criticism of the letter which showed how adept he was at playing word games, taking things out of context

and distorting other people's ideas.

Edward Pickersgill would read a sentence and then "conclusively prove" it to be "wrong". For example, the first sentence in the letter reads, "The Mini-Cultural Revolution made good progress last weekend." Edward Pickersgill rhetorically asked, "Does this mean that the Mini-Cultural Revolution didn't make good progress before last weekend?" He maintained that this first sentence "proved" the comrade didn't have a good grasp of the development of the Mini-Cultural Revolution. Edward Pickersgill had mechanically learned this dirty trick from Hardial Bains. When Edward Pickersgill was close to Bains, this KGB agent was well known for seeking praise of himself and for screwing his friends' minds around. A classic exchange of this sort would develop as follows.

Bains: "Comrade! What did you think of my speech?"

Bainzite: "Excellent! I think it was the best speech I've ever heard you make!"

Bains: "Is that right? What was wrong with all my other speeches?"

Of course, Edward Pickersgill's argument applied to the comrade's letter was so much sophistry. The comrade's sentence is a simple statement of an idea. Edward Pickersgill's attempts to infer things from it are pure concoctions from his own mind.

The second sentence in the letter states, "The Collective is definitely getting its head out of the clouds". This sentence is in reference to the three developmental stages proposed for the high tide of the Mini-Cultural Revolution, "feet on the ground, head out of the clouds, and start to move forward". Again it is a simple statement of an idea. However, Edward Pickersgill attacked it rhetorically, asking, "Who ever said the Collective's head was in the clouds?"

This nauseating process continued throughout the whole letter. It was a simple exercise in this dog's ability to play word games, and is a good reflection of his wrong line on criticism. For Edward Pickersgill, messing around the comrades' minds was the key link in criticism. Struggle for the correct political line was something he consciously abandoned time and again.

LIGHT CRITICISM OR REACTIONARY THREAT?

In the course of the first week of the Mini-Cultural Revolution, Edward Pickersgill launched a well planned attack against a member of the Collective. A couple of days before the attack began, Edward Pickersgill went into the room where this comrade was working alone. He sat down at a desk across from this comrade and angrily stared at him. The comrade was quite disconcerted by this. After a while this dog began pointing his finger and repeatedly saying, "I'm coming after you, you'd better watch out." With this performance he left the room.

What was Edward Pickersgill doing here? He was bastardizing a fact of Collective life. It is well known that a major correct criticism of a comrade never comes "out of the blue". It is preceded by a number of light criticisms which give a comrade a chance to reform his practice. If these light criticisms aren't taken up then a major criticism is launched. In the Collective, the light criticisms are called "warning signs".

Edward Pickersgill viewed his strange threat to this comrade as a "warning sign". It certainly was that — a warning sign for a reactionary attack. However it had nothing at all to do with the light criticism "warning signs" which are a normal part of the Collective's life.

The attack later levelled at this comrade was basically untrue. Although the comrade had made mistakes, Edward Pickersgill only confused the nature of the mistakes with his phoney criticism. His real purpose in making the attack was to attempt to break the spirit of the comrade in line with his general policy of "screwing the comrades' heads around".

Edward Pickersgill accused this comrade of "abandonment of leadership" and specifically for failing to do self-criticism for leadership mistakes he had made. This is an interesting charge

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