

# Soviet union leader 'poorly'

BY DAVID SATTER IN MOSCOW

THE LEADER of the Soviet Unions' first independent trade union, Mr. Vladimir Klebanov, was reported yesterday to be in poor physical condition after treatment with strong behaviour modification drugs in a special psychiatric hospital in Dnepropetrovsk.

Mr Klebanov, a former mining foreman from the Donbas region, tried in December, 1978, to organise a union which would fight for Soviet workers' rights outside the official trade union structure.

Mr Klebanov's grievances against the Soviet trade unions were similar to those of the Polish workers against the offi-

cial trade unions in Poland, which are also part of the structure of Communist Party control.

The Soviet trade union group was disbanded after a series of arrests in early 1977 and Mr. Klebanov was committed to the special psychiatric hospital in Dnepropetrovsk where Soviet dissidents have been held.

According to a reliable report, Mr. Klebanov has since been receiving continual forcible injections of behaviour modification drugs intended for severe paranoids or schizophrenics.

The effect has been to cause a severe swelling of Mr. Klebanov's face and to distort

his features and speech. His complexion has become yellow and the effect of one of the drugs has been to distort his physical movements.

Mr. Klebanov has continued to insist that he is psychologically normal and to denounce his detention in hospital as a form of repression, but this has only led to him being given extra injections of drugs with painful effects.

According to the report, Mr. Klebanov is forbidden to walk in the corridor and is only allowed out of his room for one hour a day when 300 people at a time are taken for exercise in the hospital yard.

## Murray — bridge builder

MR. LEN MURRAY, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, told a Soviet trade union journal recently that he welcomed the development of co-operation between the trade unions of the two countries.

The Soviet news agency Tass reported yesterday that Mr. Murray stressed the "problems on which our views diverge," and ascribed these to the different political, social and economic structures of the two countries.

Tass said that Mr. Murray, in an interview with the trade union journal Trud, had compared contacts between British

and Soviet trade unions with the supports on which "bridges of understanding could be built."

"We should build these bridges carefully and thoughtfully, paying special attention each time to the weight which they can sustain," the agency quoted him as saying.

Mr. Murray described problems of mutual interest as including attitudes to the multinationals, improvement of labour protection, and use of leisure time as well as disarmament, peace, detente and the relaxation of tensions between East and West.

The Morning Star [lower cutting] applauds as Len Murray 'cooperates' with the bureaucratic apparatus which runs the fake official 'unions' in the USSR — and hounds genuine trade unionists like Klebanov.

# BRITISH WORKERS AND THE STALINIST STATE 'UNIONS'

TAKEN together, the above two news items should make us angry and ashamed for our own trade unions\*.

Both appeared just as the Polish workers' movement was flaring into life, full-grown and militant from its beginning last summer, when the Polish working class kicked aside the police-state 'unions' that had helped shackle them for the last third of a century and, proceeding to take on the bureaucrats' government, then created a real workers' movement in Poland once again. Throughout the bitter and dangerous struggle of the Polish workers to win the right to have free and self-governing trade unions, the British TUC maintained friendly contact and cooperation with the strike-breaking government unions. Even when millions of Polish workers had repudiated them, the TUC continued to recognise the anti-working class police-state 'unions' as genuine labour organisations. In the middle of the strike movement the TUC stubbornly refused to call off the schedul-

ed visit of its delegates to the battlefield as guests of the scab 'unions' which were doing their best to help the Government beat down the insurgent workers. In the event the visit was called off by the Poles.

Our trade union movement maintains friendly contact with the police-state 'trade-union' apparatus of control over the working class which exists in the USSR. By its links with it, the TUC recognises this repressive apparatus as a trade union — which is to help sustain and spread a great lie. For what exist in the Stalinist states (except, for now, Poland), are not trade unions in any sense at all.

It is to preserve the monopoly of these mis-named 'trade unions', that working class militants like Klebanov and no doubt many others whose names we don't know are tortured and murdered in the USSR and the other Stalinist states.

The only real trade unions we know of in Russia are those in which Vladimir Klebanov is a militant (though there may well exist other underground workers' organisations).

The official Russian 'trade unions' are no more trade unions than were the official trade unions in Poland, against which the workers revolted. They are even worse than those of Poland, because in the USSR the 'unions' are part of a regime which represses and controls the workers of the USSR with a cauterising totalitarian thoroughness that has not been experienced in its fully developed form in Poland since 1956 (if it ever fully existed there).

Seen in the light from Poland's Solidarnosc, the ties of the TUC and its constituent unions with the police state 'unions' in the various Stalinist states, the endorsement of the lie that they are real unions, is not merely scandalous but intolerable.

*We must do something about it!*

But the official British labour movement does not seem to want to know about or concern itself with the conditions of the working class in the Stalinist states, or their struggles for basic liberties and the right to form trade unions

\* They are reproduced from Socialist Organiser no.27, October 11th, 1980.