

## We must stand up to domestic abusers

THERE is no more insidious menace than domestic violence. The home is supposed to be the place where we feel at our safest, the place where we can relax without fear. When violence is visited on the home, the consequences for the abused, and those who love that person, can be horrific.

Yesterday, a sentencing hearing that saw Danny Keena receive a term of life imprisonment for the murder of his partner of 25 years, Brigid Maguire, heard a victim-impact statement from their daughter, Jade.

The brave young woman movingly told of how she found her mother's body, 'a sight that will haunt me forever', and delivered a stark warning.

'I would like to advise anyone else who is suffering from domestic abuse not to be afraid to seek help as soon as possible so you won't end up like my mother,' she said.

In fact, Brigid Maguire did leave Keena after an earlier assault, but he turned up at the house she had moved to with Jade and her brother, and strangled her.

Jade said she never would forgive Keena. 'He never thought of (us) when he murdered our beautiful mother,' she said. And that, sadly, is true in so many of these cases. Though not all involve violence by men against women, the majority do, and they often begin when the man feels he somehow has lost the ability to control his partner.

Every woman needs to know that the first time she is hit very likely will not be the last. The only course of action is to report an abuser to gardai, and to press charges against him.

In the case of Brigid Maguire, that sadly did not work, but it does in many, many other cases.

Jade's pain at the loss of her mother is palpable. No woman should have to fear in her own home, and no child should be bereaved in this way.

If you are being abused, report it. If someone you know is being abused, don't take the path of least resistance and say or do nothing. If you know an abuser, confront him and, at the very least, insist he seek professional psychiatric help.

We have made great strides in reducing the levels of domestic violence. In memory of Brigid Maguire, and out of respect for a daughter who so bravely stood up to be counted, we must redouble our efforts to eradicate this danger completely.

## Church has to adapt

DONEGAL priest Fr Paddy O'Kane has pleaded with the Catholic Church to allow men who left the priesthood in order to marry return to active ministry.

There is, as we know, a vocations crisis already impacting the Church, and there are simply not enough priests for the country's parishes.

At the same time, in survey after survey, practising Catholics say they have no issue at all with married priests and believe celibacy to be an outmoded, unnecessary and, indeed, unhealthy tradition.

Despite a decrease in the number of believers recorded in last year's census, Catholicism still is the majority religion in this country, and the Church is a much-valued institution.

Its future can be assured only if it has enough men, and maybe someday women too, to say Mass and perform all the other ecclesiastical duties.

The Church has a habit of dismissing men such as Fr Paddy O'Kane, but his is a much more common view than the Vatican might think.

If the Church is to survive, never mind thrive, it will have to consider solutions that once appeared unthinkable.

# THE FACE

100 years after Lenin's revolution, socialism remains a byword for poverty and barbarism – yet some of our politicians still believe in this failed totalitarian ideology

ONE hundred years ago this month, a coup occurred in Russia that would change the course of human history. Fire-brand Marxist Vladimir Lenin ordered his Bolshevik militia to take control of that vast country. He did so with the intention of establishing the world's first communist state.

Lenin was an ideological zealot who believed that communism promised heaven on earth. With ironclad conviction, he was determined to eradicate the old order and bring to birth a socialist utopia. After storming the Tsar's Winter Palace in St Petersburg, the Bolsheviks arrested moderate members of the Provisional Government. But that was not enough for Lenin. If the revolution were to succeed, it must be forged from a furnace of terror.

Up to that point, the 'October Revolution' had been a relatively peaceful affair. In fact, there was no 'storming' of the Winter Palace: the revolutionaries simply walked in through a back door that had been left ajar by fleeing troops. It took a mere five days for the Bolsheviks to seize power. According to Lenin, it was 'as easy as picking up a feather'.

However, when the Bolsheviks garnered only 24% in elections to a constituent assembly in early November, Lenin decided that democracy had had its day. As he told his right-hand man Leon Trotsky: 'The breaking up of the Constituent Assembly by the Soviet power is the complete and public liquidation of formal democracy in the name of the revolutionary dictatorship.'

No ambiguity or pretence in that. This was a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and anyone who stood in its way would be sacrificed on the 'slaughter bench of history'. Newspapers were shut down, all political opposition was suppressed, the rule of law was abolished.

Lenin thundered: 'We must gather our strength, set up a dictatorial troika and institute mass terror immediately.'

Responsibility for unleashing the terror fell to the Cheka, Lenin's new secret police force. British historian Orlando Figes commented that the Cheka's torture methods were 'matched only by the Spanish Inquisition'. According to the Cheka's own estimates, more than 15,000 were liquidated within the first two months of the 'Red Terror' alone.

The tortures and murders were merciless. Peasants, striking workers, the clergy, anyone with a gripe against the new regime, were subject to the most inhumane treatment. Crucifixions, flaying and skinning alive were routine. Concentration camps and mass graves became commonplace across Russia.

The 'new utopia' had been born and yet the workers starved, the peasants were exterminated in their thousands and all basic freedoms were denied. Russia had once been ruled by a despotic Tsar, but now it was in the grip of madmen who, in the words of Joshua Muravchik, 'had forged the greatest system of absolutism history had ever known'.

The promised land of milk and honey was all a grotesque sham. Terror, deprivation and famine were the true story.

Lenin died in 1924 and was replaced by Joseph Stalin – a man even more fanatically brutal than his predecessor.

SATURDAY  
ESSAY



by Dr Mark  
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By the time Stalin died in 1952, 30million Russians were dead. The country and its Soviet satellites – which encompassed all Eastern Europe – comprised one vast system of repression, murder and deprivation. Gulags, torture chambers and the secret police had become the essence of socialism.

It is often said that Stalin's was a deviation from 'true socialism'. The truth, however, is that wherever communism took root, tyranny flourished.

For example, China's Chairman Mao has the distinction of being the greatest mass killer in history. Pol Pot wiped out a

quarter of Cambodia's population in just two years. North Korea continues to remind the world why communism was evil, pure and simple.

And even in those communist countries that were governed by more benign despots, repression and deprivation were still the order of the day.

I am old enough to remember that menacing monstrosity they called the 'Berlin Wall'.

There it stood – a symbol, not of freedom or social justice, but of subjugation. The communist cadres of East Germany could not stop people from fleeing their cruel system and so they

built a wall to lock them in. Socialism is slavery. As I said on radio recently, there has not been a single day of happiness under any socialist system – anywhere. That is why, in 1989, the benighted souls of the Soviet empire decided enough was enough. These were not the so-called 'bourgeoisie' that Lenin sought to scapegoat and annihilate. They were the long-suffering workers of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and East Germany.

Yes, it was the workers – the 'proletariat' – who saw right through that evil system. Led by Polish electrician Lech Walesa, the Solidarity movement constituted the very people that Lenin said his revolution would liberate from Tsarist subjugation. The workers saw socialism for what it was, because, ironically, it was they who were directly targeted by its murder machine. Who can



# OF TYRANNY



Lenin, above, is admired by socialists, such as, from top, Jeremy Corbyn, Paul Murphy and Gerry Adams

airport, he was detained by the secret police, who searched his luggage. Inside, they 'discovered' a sachet containing a brown substance. He was thrown into jail on the charge of 'production and trafficking of drugs' and was only released through the direct intervention of French President François Mitterrand. On his return to France, Derrida remarked: 'Until one is touched by something like this, one cannot imagine what a paradise of liberty we live in.'

It is easy to style yourself a socialist and to speak admiringly of Marx, Lenin or Mao when you live in a free-market democracy governed by the rule of law.

It is easy to do so when, as a privately educated and pampered politician, a tenured academic or a student in leafy suburbia, you don't face exile or extermination.

But what a grievous insult it is to those who suffered and survived the KGB or the East German Stasi. What an insult to those who have only known freedom, and a life without fear, since 1989.

It is an insult because to them, Marxism, socialism and communism are bywords for misery, slaughter and cruelty. They know from bitter experience that it is a system which leads not to heaven on earth but to the pits of hell.

**T**HE October Revolution unleashed a century of carnage, the grim consequences of which are still evident. Lenin knew that his movement could only achieve success through terror. How else could you convince people to sacrifice their liberty, their possessions, their culture and their faith? And when, after 70 long years of hardship, they finally broke through that menacing wall into this, our 'paradise of liberty', we saw for ourselves the ruin that was wrought by those who inaugurated the 'greatest tragedy of our age'.

Equally tragic, however, is that, despite all of this, socialism is enjoying a resurgence, thanks to those who are old enough to know better. For them, Lenin was not a maniacal dictator but a moral hero who did what was necessary to push history in the right direction.

Such shameful revisionism serves only to silence communism's countless victims, who still cry for justice from their mass graves.

It serves only to mask the unspeakable crimes of people who hypocritically dared to claim that capitalism was the root of all evil.

It is true that capitalism has its faults. But where there is capitalism there is also democracy, the rule of law and a basic standard of living. There is freedom of travel, a welfare state and a police force that is ultimately accountable to the people.

Take all that away and you get Lenin's 'utopia'.

You get the drab, dilapidated, derelict cities of the communist kingdom, where fear vanquishes freedom and where deprivation and death threaten at every turn.

That is the ugly reality of socialism – a reality that shames those who think it should be anywhere but on the scrapheap of history.

forget those incredible scenes of ordinary people tearing down the Berlin Wall by hand?

Who can forget the statues of Lenin, Stalin and Romanian tyrant Nicolae Ceausescu being toppled by the ecstatic 'proletariat'? Seventy years of horror were at an end because the 'workers of the world' defied their wicked masters.

And yet, despite the untold misery and terror unleashed by Lenin's 'October Revolution', many today speak approvingly of a system which claimed more than one hundred million lives.

In Britain, Jeremy Corbyn openly speaks of his admiration for Marxism, saying that we still have a lot to learn from Marx. His young supporters, which comprise the sinister Momentum movement, go weak at the knees whenever their leader begins to wax about the virtues of this 'great economist'.

Marxism has only one economic legacy: starvation, poverty, waste and chronic shortages. And what

of all those millions of peasants and workers murdered by the Marxists – where do they feature in Mr Corbyn's worldview? Surely, it is they, and not their evil oppressors, who should be honoured by those claiming to stand on the side of working people.

With all that we now know about the true horrors of communism, how could any self-respecting person call himself a communist, a socialist or a Marxist?

Rightly, we condemn those who speak approvingly of the Nazis. So why do we accept elected politicians posturing as communists or Marxists? How is it that genocidal monsters like Mao and Lenin are considered chic by a whole new generation?

We are not immune to this here in Ireland. Sinn Féin styles itself as a socialist party, as does the so-called Anti-Austerity Alliance. Paul Murphy TD did a postgraduate thesis on 'socialist law' and, in typical communist jargon, criticised

last Tuesday's Budget as one which will 'enrich a tiny minority of developers and the wealthy at the expense of everyone else'.

**I**N other words, the wealth-creators, and those who fund our vast welfare budget, are the true enemies of the ideal socialist republic. For people like Murphy and Corbyn, the so-called 'wealthy' are the new bourgeoisie – a group that must be punitively taxed, so that others can perpetually feed off the State.

Corbyn and Murphy witnessed the misery of those imprisoned behind the Iron Curtain. They saw the jubilation of those who exposed Lenin's dream as a monstrous nightmare. They observed the working-class heroes of Solidarity peacefully topple the Polish junta. And yet, with shameless indifference, they chant all the same sorry slogans as those ruthless tyrants

that constituted the 'vanguard of the proletariat'.

Instead of showing solidarity with the countless victims of socialism, it seems they want to stand with those who persecuted them. How else can you explain their fulsome eulogies to Fidel Castro, or Corbyn's recent disturbing support for the foundering socialist regime of Venezuela?

Why not stand in solidarity with anti-communist heroes like Lech Walesa or the late Vaclav Havel?

Their courage helped liberate millions of our brothers and sisters across Europe from those that Corbyn, Murphy and Gerry Adams routinely praise.

My friend the French philosopher, Jacques Derrida, was arrested by the Czech secret police in 1981. He had travelled to Prague to address an underground seminar of anti-communist dissidents.

They were ordinary people who had spent their lives fighting socialist injustice. Leaving for the