

Editorial

For socialists and revolutionaries today the Russian Revolution is an event to both celebrate and learn from. One hundred years on it remains the greatest working class struggle and the greatest revolution in history. It is therefore an extraordinarily rich laboratory of strategy and tactics. This special issue of *Irish Marxist Review* is our contribution to this celebration and this study.

The different articles provide an exploration of different aspects of the Revolution. The first by John Molyneux offers a general argument for the Revolution's contemporary relevance and indicates specific political lessons to be learned from this gigantic experience. James O'Toole in 'How the Revolution was Won' focuses on the essential role played by the Bolshevik Party in 1917. Madeleine Johansson uses the figure of Russia's best known female revolutionary, Alexandra Kollontai, to examine the Revolution's relation to women's liberation and Sean Egan complements this with an account of the sexual revolution that accompanied the workers revolution, with particular reference to LGBT+ liberation.

We are very pleased to publish an interview with Kevin Murphy from the University of Massachusetts on 'How the Russian

Revolution was Lost' and some of the same issues are tackled in John Molyneux's detailed rebuttal of 'the continuity thesis' that Leninism merely paved the way for Stalinism, which also analyses Stalinism as a counter revolutionary reaction to the failure of the Revolution to spread internationally. Colm Bryce examines the powerful response to the Russian Revolution in Ireland in its revolutionary years, thus offering further confirmation of the enormous international reach of the Revolution at that time. And finally Barney Doherty reviews John Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World* which remains a classic eye-witness journalistic account of the October Revolution and is an excellent starting point for the study we have referred to. For those coming new to the Russian Revolution we also provide a chronology of the main events.

We also publish Kieran Allen's piece on socialist strategy in Ireland today partly on its own merits as a very useful account of where the struggle for socialism in this country is at and where it needs to go and partly as a reminder that revolutionaries are not interested in history just for its own sake but as an aid to changing the world today.

- John Molyneux