

Introduction

New Hope

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New Proposals Editorial Collective

This issue of *New Proposals* takes as its inspiration the wave of revolutionary change that swept Europe in the early years of the 20th century. In the face of massive social ills caused by a radically new form of industrial capitalism, working people the world over took control over their lives, their communities, their workplaces and their countries. From the general strikes of Western Canada and the Western United States of America, through the socialist, popular or communist revolutions from Mexico to Russia, working people were asserting their right to fairness, equity and, in many cases, the basic necessities of life.

Looking back over more than 100 years of revolutionary socialist movements we are able to point to many flaws, setbacks, and disappointments. But we should also be able to draw from the courage and tenacity of people who continue to believe that there is a place, there is a hope, and there is a chance to make the world a better place. We originally had planned to be publishing this issue in conjunction with the anniversary of the Russian Revolution on October 25, 2007. Obviously hope isn't all that is required to make change or to produce journals. But without hope, without a belief that it is possible and right to struggle for a better world we will all live an impoverished life.

We are pleased to be able to publish an original paper by one of the leading socialist anthropological scholars alive in North America, Professor June Nash. Throughout Professor Nash's illustrious career she constantly has made the connection between academic scholarship and, very importantly, serving the struggles of working women and men. As we go to

press, Professor Nash is yet again in the field working alongside of the people she writes about from Mexico,

where a virtual war is going on in the Lacandon jungle. The process that I described in "Development to Unite Us" is erupting in the tourist sites: Palenque and Agua Azul, Montes Azules, and other much frequented sites. The Calderon government is using the Secretaria de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, the agency set up to preserve natural resources, as their platform for taking over sites from *ejido* collective communities. They then sell rights to develop the lands and environs with transnational hotels, restaurants, spas. This is a process I mentioned in the article in relation to Huitepec and Lagos Bellas near the Ch'inkultik classic site.... It involves the greatest land takeover to date in the Zapatista territory (personal communication, February 25, 2008).

There is much that has remained the same today and the need for the organized struggle of working people is no less urgent today than it was on the 25th of October, 1917. This journal is one small part of the global struggle for a just and equitable world. We use the means at our disposal; that is the language of the academy and the instruments of scholarship. It is a complement to the sweat and tears and joys of political, social, and civil struggle. As we work in our communities we should be mindful of the struggles in the Lacandon jungle, the streets of Kenya, the hills of Afghanistan, the suburbs of Paris. As you read the papers that follow we ask you—no, we challenge you—to ask how you can make a difference, however small, in your world.