

*Just when you thought it couldn't be done*

# Dr. Peters has changed the world

*The distortion and inaccuracy of the "traditional" world map, developed for navigators in 1569, has given the world a false impression of itself. German historian Dr. Arno Peters seeks to correct that impression with this completely area-accurate map of the world.*

by Jackie Kaiser  
Reprinted from the *Cord Weekly*

Take a good look at that map on the wall. Chances are, it's a Mercator map — the more or less "standard" world projection that has been used in homes, classrooms, and offices since its creation some 400 years ago. This very familiar global view, developed by Flemish-born German cartographer Gerhard Kremer Mercier (better known by his latinized name Gerardus Mercator), was designed for navigation of the high seas. Indeed, the Mercator map — the first to show compass courses as straight lines — remains an ideal tool for use by sailors. Mercator never intended his navigational map to be used as a world map, notes WLU geography

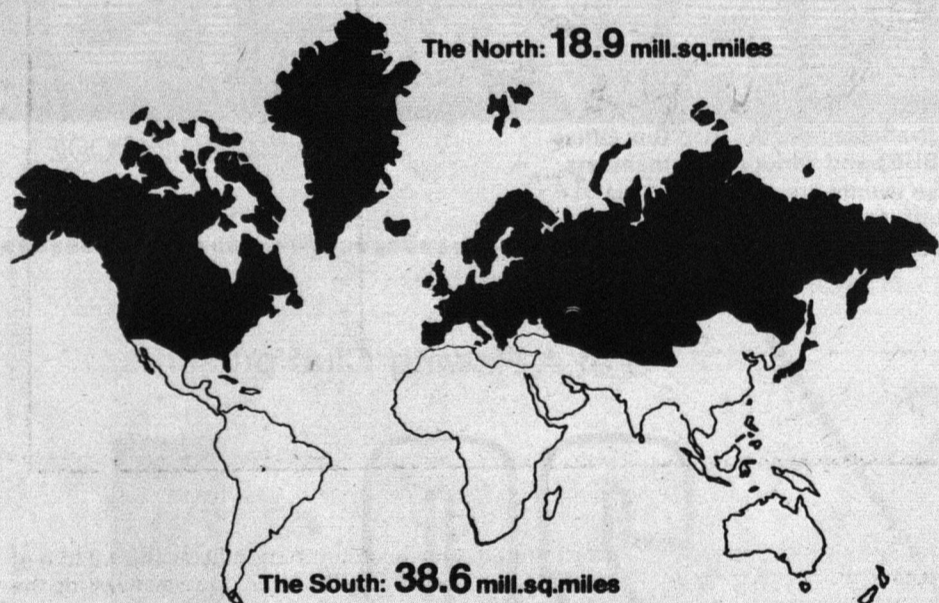
professor Dr. C. Grant Head. Unfortunately, largely because of ignorance, the Mercator projection ended up on classroom walls, says Head.

### Inaccurate world picture

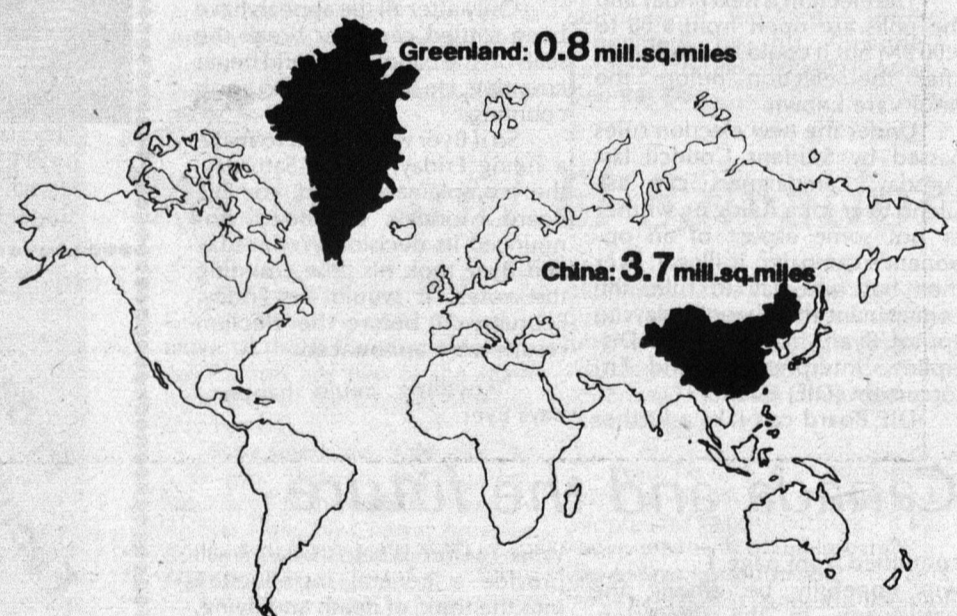
The problem with the Mercator map is that it presents us with a very distorted world view. As was the custom of the time, Mercator designed his map with his homeland — and consequently all of Western Europe — at its center point. In reality, Germany is situated in the northernmost quarter of the globe. It is this Europe-centered nature of the Mercator projection and the resulting huge distortion of land masses that have moved German historian and philosopher Dr. Arno

Peters to develop a new world projection that shows land masses in their correct proportions.

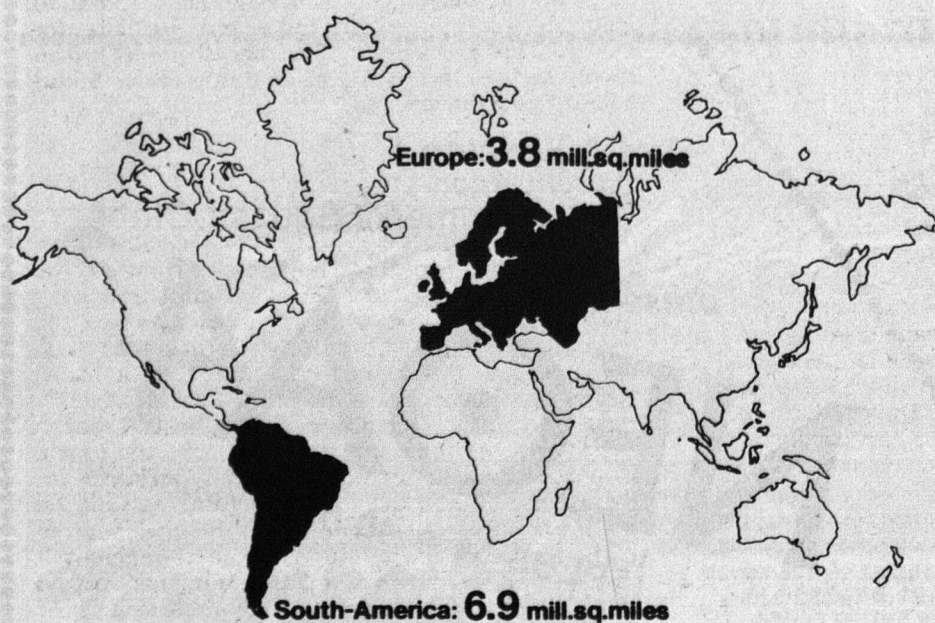
- Looking at the Mercator map, we find that:
- Greenland appears to be twice as large as China, although China is in reality four times as large as Greenland.
  - The half of the world's surface that lies north of the equator covers two-thirds of the Mercator map, while the southern hemisphere is compressed to one-third of the map.
  - While Africa is in fact almost 50 per cent larger than the Soviet Union, the Mercator map depicts the U.S.S.R. as more than twice the size of Africa.
  - Europe is shown on the Mercator map to be larger than South America, while it is really 50 per cent smaller.
  - While Scandinavia appears larger than India on the Mercator map, India is actually about three times larger.



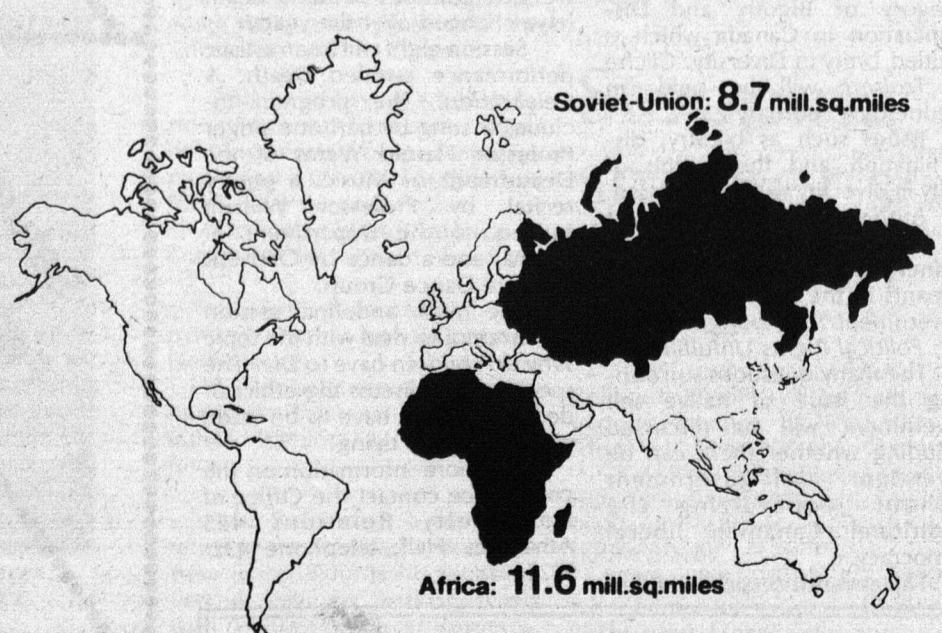
*The traditional Mercator map distorts the world to the advantage of the North. While the North is in fact only half as large as the South, the Mercator map shows it to be much larger.*



*The traditional map exaggerates the northernmost areas; as a result, southern areas of the globe seem small by comparison. Greenland appears to be larger than China, although China is really four times its size.*



*Devised in 1569 in Germany, the Mercator map shows Europe to be larger than South America, which is really almost double the size of Europe.*



*The Soviet Union appears on the Mercator map to be more than double the size of Africa, in spite of the fact that Africa is actually much larger.*