

UNION OF SOCIALIST GEOGRAPHERS
Provisional Organizing Committee

Communication One -- For General Circulation -- Report of Founding Meeting

Toronto, May 26-29, 1974. During the meetings of the Canadian Association of Geographers and under the roof of the Toronto Geographical Expedition, a large group of radical and socialist geographers from throughout North America met to discuss items of mutual interest. It was the consensus of those gathered that the time had been reached to form a separate organization of geographers of radical or revolutionary commitments. Much of our time was given over to discussion of the nature of such an organization. Discussion can be divided into two major areas of concern: (1) Name; (2) Structure.

Name. Should we be a Union of Radical Geographers, or of Socialist geographers? The majority faction urged the term Socialist out of the concern that we clearly identify our thrust within defined political realities. A substantial minority argued that socialist was too limiting, and/or would cause organizational difficulties since prospective members might be put off by the title, socialist. A vote was taken on the question, and the title "Union of Socialist Geographers," gathered the majority of votes. A working group drafted a "Preamble" for the USG which is enclosed and needs further discussion and consideration. It is here suggested that given the brevity of our meetings and the large potential size of a Union of Socialist Geographers, that we consider ourselves--at this time--a provisional organizing committee for the USG and not the Union itself.

Structure. This area was divided into three sub-areas: membership, coordination, meetings. Membership was to be open to all who would subscribe to the principles of the organization and pay dues. (Dues were raised to the amount of \$50 to pay for initial mailings, etc.) Coordination was to be through the mail. Akatiff was to prepare occasional mailings to the general membership, and also to establish a regional hierarchy of communicants who would circulate materials locally. In addition, all members are to receive a membership list and direct communication is encouraged. To the degree the structure functions correctly, there will be multiple points of postal coordination. It was further suggested that pre-existent outlets might serve as a vehicle of communication--special mention was made of the AAG newsletter, Serge, and Antipode. A recent communication from Peet suggests that the latter organ might be available for such a venture. Meetings were discussed at some length. There was strong feeling that a national conclave of radical and socialist geographers was needed, to be held independent of AAG or CAG meetings. Practical aspects, however, seemed to indicate that the practice of holding concurrent meetings is likely to persist for some time. The need was expressed for the convening of regional meetings which might be coordinated by mail and phone. There appears to be at least five areas wherein sufficient people could be attracted to hold regional meetings. Let's have some correspondence on this subject. To start, let me suggest the Thanksgiving weekend (USA) as a good target date. Can others organize around that date? Can we develop a roughly parallel agenda?

Final note. Surely there are ten times the number of prospective members than the names we now have. We need to publicize ourselves, grow in numbers (and increase our international base) for the purpose of holding a founding convention (possibly in Milwaukee) wherein we are transformed from a Provisional Organizing Committee to an actual and strong Union.

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