



The History

Richard A. Bennett



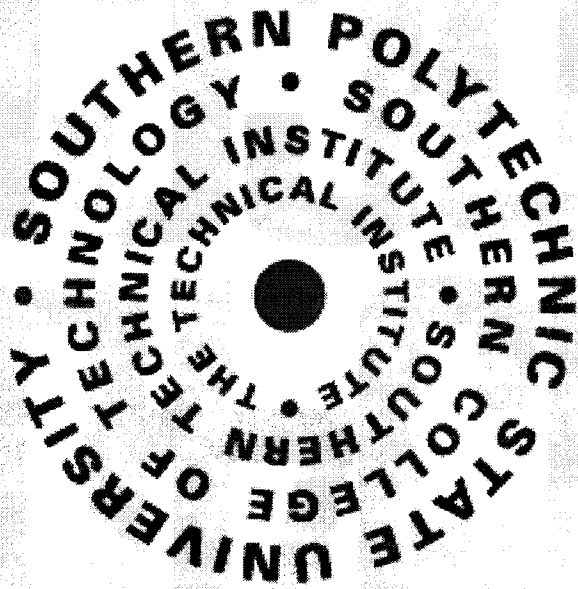
On behalf of Southern Polytechnic State University, we are pleased to present you with a copy of Southern Polytechnic State University: The History. We tremendously appreciate your efforts on behalf of the University.

This book was written by Dr. Richard A. Bennett, Associate Professor in our Social and International Studies Department, in conjunction with the celebration of SPSU's fiftieth anniversary. Publication of the book was made possible by the SPSU Foundation. Dr. Bennett has done a fine job, and we believe you will find his work interesting and informative.

Southern Polytechnic has a proud past and looks forward to a bright future. Thank you for your contributions to the success of SPSU.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel S. Papp". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "P" at the end.

Daniel S. Papp
Interim President



The History

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List of Abbreviations

<u>AC</u>	<u>Atlanta Constitution</u> (newspaper)
AIG	Associated Industries of Georgia
<u>AJC</u>	<u>Atlanta Journal and Constitution</u> (newspaper)
<u>AJ</u>	<u>Atlanta Journal</u> (newspaper)
ASEE	American Society for Engineering Education
ECPD	Engineer's Council for Professional Development
EED	Engineering Extension Division
GTA	Archives, Library Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology
GTA, PF, TI	Archives, Library Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology, Presidential Files, Technical Institute
<u>MDJ</u>	<u>Marietta Daily Journal</u> (newspaper)
SACS	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
STA	Southern Tech Archives

Preface

In the middle 1940s there were no technical institutes in the South and few southern industries understood what a technical institute did. Following World War II, the explosion in technologies created a gap between the craftsman and the research-trained engineer. Industry needed a "technician" who could communicate with both engineer and craftsman. Dr. Van Leer, president of Georgia Tech, was approached by industry representatives about the possibility of creating such a training program. The result was Southern Tech.

The first quarter of classes began on March 24, 1948, with 116 students in buildings located on the site of the Naval Air Station in Chamblee (now part of the DeKalb-Peachtree airport facility). Each year, Southern Tech turned out an increasing number of technicians for industries, mostly in Georgia, and assisted in the creation of similar schools around the South. The program of study was 18 months with classes six days per week, nearly all day long. A sustained media and speaking circuit blitz by members of the faculty and administration was mounted to introduce industry to the "technician" concept.

Planned relocation of the Naval Air Station, in 1958, meant loss of the Chamblee campus. Political considerations influenced the subsequent decision to relocate Southern Tech to Cobb County. In 1961, in time for the (delayed) beginning of the fall quarter, in totally new and some not-yet-finished quarters, Southern Tech opened on the present campus. With an enrollment approaching 5000 students envisioned for 1970, two dormitories, a gymnasium, and a library were added during the 1960s. Through 1965, enrollments generally increased, but industry began to change toward greater specialization, and the Vietnam war took an increasing number of potential students through the military draft. In addition, many draft-eligible students chose to attend four-year schools, rather than the two-year program at Southern Tech.

By 1969, with enrollments having fallen by nearly one-third, it was obvious that some changes were required in the program at Southern Tech. Though each student still had up to five job offers at graduation, the technician no longer completed the management team due to emerging technologies and changing management techniques. During the 1960s, the engineering technologist had emerged, combining the training of a technician with the breadth of background afforded by a four-year degree. Every other technical institute which had already been accredited by 1948, as well as some others which developed later than Southern Tech, had already shifted to a four-year program, and in 1970, Southern Tech joined those ranks, though it remained a branch of Georgia Tech.

In its first decades, Southern Tech had enjoyed a very supportive relationship with Georgia Tech. However, the quality of this relationship changed after Southern Tech began offering a four-year degree program. Difficulties managing two schools with such different emphases led, in 1979, to the separation of Southern Tech from her parent institution. As an autonomous school, reporting directly to the Chancellor and the Board of Regents, numerous additional programs were subsequently added, and in 1986 Southern Tech was reorganized into Southern College of Technology. This action recognized the school's growth as an institution and enabled it to better prepare students for meeting the employment needs of industry. As a result, the school experienced further growth and development in its program, including the addition of graduate degrees and broader programs of study. In 1996, the name of the college was again changed - to Southern Polytechnic State University.

As Southern Polytech celebrates 50 years of service to industry, new technologies continue to open new opportunities and new horizons, demanding new visions. Just as in the 1940s, engineering and technology remain second only to medicine in the level of educational funding required to support its academic programs. As well, new questions continue to arise over the place of engineering technology in industry, which is further complicated by the interdisciplinary character of the discipline. Being on the "cutting edge" of technology demands a sustained, high level of support to remain effective. Frequently, political and economic realities challenge the school, but meeting such challenges has been the basis of Southern Polytech's success.

In any work of this sort, there are many who have helped in its creation. The author wishes to thank former President Cheshier and Vice President Travis of Southern Polytechnic State University for their support and encouragement in this undertaking. The author also thanks the library staff at Georgia Tech who cheerfully and sometimes painstakingly worked with him in researching files relating to the early years of Southern Tech's development. Without their help, the information included in the first chapters would have been much less complete. The staff of the Southern Polytechnic State University library also graciously gave of their time and assistance in obtaining the materials to complete this project, and the College Development Office helped in providing photographs for use in the book. It would be remiss to not also include the numerous faculty, former faculty, friends, and alumni of the school which the author had the chance to meet and interview during the preparation of this history. Without their perspectives, anecdotes, and analyses, this work could not have been completed. Special thanks is warranted for the assistance given by Dr. Peter Garretson, Dr. Rebecca Kelly, and Dr. Charles Weeks for reading the manuscript, and for their many helpful suggestions. Also, to Professor Al Troemel for his recollections and assistance in selecting the photographs used for this work. The author also wishes to thank his family for their patience and encouragement

throughout the preparation of this history. Finally the author thanks you the reader, for your interest in Southern Polytechnic State University, and in its history. It is hoped that through this work, you will be able to relive many of the moments which have been part of the school's first fifty years. May the years yet to come be as full and meaningful as these first fifty have been.

Marietta, Georgia 1997

Chapter One

The Missing Link

The establishment of a technical institute program in Georgia was part of a fundamental economic shift which swept the state, indeed the entire South, following World War II. Before the war, the primary economic base in the South had been agriculture, though a shift toward industry was beginning to occur. Nevertheless, education, research, and budget considerations all focused on the traditional agricultural economic base, and this continued even after the war. Meanwhile the role of industry was increasing dramatically. In 1946 alone, some 600 new industries located within the state of Georgia; the situation was the same in many other southern states.¹ With the new technologies developed before and during the war years, industrial processes were becoming highly specialized. As a result, industry embraced the "team concept" in which engineers and scientists worked on research and development while craftsmen did the building and implementation. The liaison between these, the "missing link" who was conversant with both the theoretical aspects of technology and the practical concerns of the craftsman, was the "technician."

Technicians most often received their formal training at a technical institute. Nationally, the first technical institute had been established in 1875 in New York City. However, the movement grew slowly. By 1922 there were only thirteen technical institutes in the United States, mostly in the Northeast.² Even by 1940, the technical institute program was virtually unknown in the largely agricultural South, except to some industry leaders. The training focused on the practical, theoretical, and supervisory aspects of engineering. Rapid post-war industrial expansion created an enormous demand for graduates of these technical institutes. However, with the schools for training such specialists located mostly in the Northeast and the West, all too often Georgia's native sons, educated in her secondary schools, left the state for education elsewhere and frequently did not return to work in Georgia's industries.³ This not only drained Georgia's economy and human resources, but already existing

¹The Macon Telegraph, 3 March 1948.

²W. L. Hughes, "A Brief Chronology of the Technical Institute Movement in America." The American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), 1947. This was a brochure prepared by the ASEE when Mr. Hughes was chairman of the Technical Institute Division.

³AC, 26 September 1949; AC, 24 November 1949.

industries were beginning to fall behind other regions of the United States in production and growth. Unaddressed, the situation could discourage new industrial development in the region, and undermine the momentum for post-war industrial growth in the South.

With the inauguration of Colonel Blake R. Van Leer as President of Georgia School of Technology on July 1, 1944, Georgia Tech began an intentional, planned effort to address the needs of industry by becoming a major technological university serving Georgia and the South. He was an engineer by training, and as a leader he was an infrastructure builder.⁴ In cooperation with the Chancellor and the Board of Regents, Georgia Tech enlarged its graduate and research programs, enhanced the educational level of the faculty, and increased its physical facilities significantly under his leadership. Active in the engineering world, Van Leer was also well aware of a 1944 study by the Sub-Committee on Technical Institutes of the Engineer's Council for Professional Development (ECPD) which indicated that industry "...needs and can advantageously employ at least three times as many technical institute graduates as they can four year engineering college graduates."⁵ This study went on to explain that, in fact, many engineers were being employed in industry beneath their education and ability because of the need for technicians. In as much as Van Leer was intending to make Georgia Tech the state's leading engineering and technological school, he believed that Tech should also sponsor a technical institute program to meet the demands of industry.

Even in 1944, it was clear that soon World War II would begin to wind down and thousands of soldiers would be demobilized upon their return to the United States. These veterans would need to find employment, or alternatively, to further their education. On June 22, 1944, the G. I. Bill for World War II veterans was passed to address, in part, exactly this issue. Included in the bill was financial assistance for those who chose to further their education. Van Leer intended that Georgia Tech should provide that opportunity to as many veterans as possible.⁶ Despite the popularity of traditional four-year college programs such as those

⁴Robert C. McMath, Jr., Ronald H. Baylor, James E. Brittain, et al, Engineering the New South: Georgia Tech, 1885-1985. (Athens: University Press, 1985) p. 237. Georgia Tech changed its name to the Georgia Institute of Technology in 1948, emphasizing the enhancements of its program.

⁵"Report of the Sub-Committee on Technical Institutes of the Engineer's Council for Professional Development," April 1944.

⁶Limitations included the number of months of assistance available, the length of time a veteran would have to begin training and finish training, as well as the dollar amounts involved.

traditionally offered at Georgia Tech, many veterans were interested in getting the training needed for a job in industry and going to work. Often they had young families to support, and the war had already taken several working years from them. The two-year program of a technical institute was well-suited to their personal situation and goals and easily within the limits of their G. I. Bill benefits. The federal government also initiated a variety of programs during the post-war period to assist educational institutions seeking to expand or enhance their curricula. Such assistance included direct federal grants and disposal of surplus equipment and properties.

In November 1944, Van Leer created a Committee on Technical Institutes at Tech to deal with "all questions relating to Technical Institutes and Junior Colleges."⁷ Professor R. S. Howell, Director of the Engineering Extension Division, chaired the committee. Pending federal legislation would establish technical institutes in each state, and Van Leer was concerned that in Georgia any such schools should prepare students for admission to Georgia Tech and not attempt to duplicate the "expensive instruction required in the upper division and graduate division of our professional engineering school."⁸ In March 1945, the report submitted to Van Leer by the Committee on Technical Institutes established the basis upon which a technical institute program could be formed under the direction of Georgia Tech. The committee recommended that Georgia Tech "have a strong voice in the establishing of policies for the operation of Technical Institutes within the State of Georgia."⁹ They urged that the Board of Regents have the training placed under the University System and then delegate control and supervision of the program to Georgia Tech. Further, they recommended that a technical institute department be established within the Engineering Extension Division to carry out the actual coordination and supervision.¹⁰

The increasing number of returning war veterans in 1945 served to intensify the pressure to train technicians. Some companies began to train their own personnel after they had hired them. In other instances, companies brought in trained personnel from outside the state, while native Georgians were often forced to accept lesser jobs in industry. Returning veterans also caused enrollments at institutions of higher

⁷Van Leer to Howell, Sweigert, Case, Weber, Honnell, 23 November 1944 (Archives, Library Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology, hereafter: GTA. Presidential Files (PF), Technical Institute (TI)).

⁸Ibid.

⁹Report to Van Leer, 28 March 1945. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁰Ibid.

education to increase dramatically, including enrollments at Georgia Tech. In response to such an avalanche of students, Tech sought temporary classroom and housing facilities while additional facilities were constructed on campus. Additionally, after occupying the new campus buildings, the temporary facilities could be used for a technical institute program.

The need for technically-trained personnel was underscored by a study in 1945, which indicated that the Soviet Union already had twenty times as many technicians as the United States.¹¹ Clearly this suggested that just as the "Cold War" was beginning, the United States was falling behind the Soviet Union in industrial potential. In early 1945, the Associated Industries of Georgia (AIG) invited President Van Leer to speak to them. As early as 1940, the AIG had discussed the need for a technical institute in Georgia to train specialists for the increasingly sophisticated technologies being employed by industry. When Van Leer asked how Georgia Tech could increase the level of its services to Georgia's industries, they responded:

Georgia Tech is providing the officers of industry and we can train the privates of industry, our great need is for the sergeants of industry... [i.e., technicians].¹²

Colonel Van Leer then challenged the AIG to work with Georgia Tech, using the school's facilities to set up a technical institute program under Tech's auspices.¹³

With the support of Georgia's industries, Van Leer began to seek support from the Chancellor and Regents for a technical institute program, and the financial resources to bring it into existence. After Chancellor S. V. Sanford was convinced of the need for a technical institute program, he presented it to the Board of Regents at their meeting on June 10, 1945. Though not fully convinced, the Regents authorized Chancellor Sanford and President Van Leer to constitute a committee

¹¹Referenced in The Macon Telegraph, 3 March 1948, and in a letter: Harrison to All Georgia Industries, 23 February 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

¹²From a speech by L. V. Johnson, 1963. He was to become the first director of Southern Tech and was awarded the James H. McGraw award in 1963 for his contributions to technical institute education.

¹³The Georgia Tech Engineer, January 1949, p. 18-19. Van Leer had already begun to work on the technical institute issue by this time but knew that he would need the enthusiastic support of Georgia's industries to lobby the Regents, and even possibly the state legislature and governor, in order to make it a reality.

charged with investigating the possibility of creating such a program.¹⁴ In his presentation to the Regents, Chancellor Sanford suggested one of the existing junior colleges in the state could be designated as a technical institute and placed "under the management and guidance" of Georgia Tech.¹⁵ Two sites located some distance from Atlanta were subsequently considered for a technical institute campus but eventually rejected.

The junior college Chancellor Sanford had in mind when addressing the Regents was in Americus, Georgia.¹⁶ In May 1945, a delegation from Americus presented the State Board of Education with an offer of \$500,000 in U. S. Army property for development of education in the region. When the Board of Education declined the offer, the Board of Regents expressed an interest in it.¹⁷ The Chancellor considered the property, which included an administration building, barracks, hospital, hangar, and other facilities, potentially suitable for a technical institute. Acquiring this property would allow the state to move quickly to establish such a program. Though the Committee on Technical Institutes examined the Americus site and concurred with the Chancellor, there were reservations. The committee felt it would be too difficult for Georgia Tech to effectively administer the program from such a distance, and Van Leer feared that the school might eventually become a rival to Georgia Tech. Nevertheless, in their preliminary report to Van Leer the committee proposed a tentative curriculum, and formulated a budget for the project. This proposal used the existing curricula of the junior college at Americus while adding the technical curriculum of a technical institute, whether for credit or otherwise. Ultimate control and operation of the entire program would be vested in Georgia Tech.¹⁸ However, the issues raised by the committee effectively terminated the Americus idea.

On November 14, 1945, Van Leer was scheduled to speak in Gainesville, Georgia. The editor of the Gainesville News suggested that they might visit the Naval Aviation Technical Training Center as well. The site was to be declared surplus but

¹⁴Siebert to Sanford and Van Leer, 3 July 1945. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Van Leer to Howell, 6 July 1945. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁷AC, 14 May 1945.

¹⁸Report of Committee to Van Leer, 7 August 1945. GTA, PF, TI. Actually the tenor of the report was somewhat negative: options presented are quite tentative, budget matters were considered unresolvable "at present," enrollment might not justify the project. A list of ten unanswered questions also accompanied the report.

no further decisions had yet been made. Its facilities made it potentially suitable for immediate use as a temporary solution to campus overcrowding at Georgia Tech, as well as for a technical institute program. In addition, Regent Sandy Beaver would be there.¹⁹ He strongly supported the initiative to build Georgia Tech into a first-class institution but had been resistant to any technical institute program under University System control. Van Leer subsequently formed a three-person committee of investigation to consider using the site for one or more of Tech's special training programs.²⁰ Again, this committee was hesitant, but in the final report they recommended using the facility, particularly noting its potential usefulness once the technical institute program was established.²¹ However, the Board of Regents rejected the proposal believing any supplemental campus facilities for Georgia Tech needed to be closer to Atlanta.²²

In January 1946, Van Leer, with the assistance of Georgia Senators Walter F. George and Richard Russell, succeeded in locating acceptable temporary facilities for Georgia Tech by leasing twenty-three buildings at the Atlanta Naval Air Station in Chamblee, Georgia from the Navy.²³ The facilities were converted into dormitories and classrooms capable of housing and training up to 750 students. A special bus shuttle was created to transport students to the Georgia Tech campus for their laboratory work. Success in using this site subsequently made it an opportune location for Tech to establish their technical institute. Once new physical facilities on campus were occupied by Georgia Tech during the 1947-48 academic year, the lease with the Navy would require the Naval Air Station facilities either to be restored to their original condition, or continue to be used by Georgia Tech in another manner acceptable to the Navy. Therefore, several of the buildings would become part of the first campus for Tech's day school technical institute program.

While little occurred visibly in the way of progress toward establishing a technical institute during 1946, behind the scenes a framework was gradually emerging. Clearly, any technical institute established would be under the auspices of

¹⁹A. S. Hardy to Van Leer, 7 November 1945. GTA, PF, TI.

²⁰Hon. John Sullivan, Secretary of the Air Force to E. B. Dunlap, 19 November 1945; Report of Committee to Van Leer, 21 November 1945. GTA, PF, TI.

²¹Report of Committee to Van Leer, 3 December 1945. GTA, PF, TI.

²²Van Leer to Board of Regents, 5 December 1945; Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 9 January 1946; Van Leer to Paty, 3 April 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

²³AC, 18 January 1946. The cost to Georgia Tech was \$1.00 per year.

Georgia Tech, most probably directed through the Engineering Extension Division. In its initial report of August 1945, the Committee on Technical Institutes had suggested that the goal would be to prepare students for admission to Georgia Tech.²⁴ But the program subsequently developed by Tech was a terminal two-year certificate program to train students as engineering aides and technicians. Coursework would include certain basic studies (e.g. English, Physics, Drafting, and Algebra) as well as specialized courses in a variety of technical options. The technical options were also becoming better defined, as were budgetary issues.

In addition to evolving a clearer vision for the technical institute project, cultivating support among the Regents and the business community for the project was imperative. To some Regents, the creation of a technical institute program seemed antithetical to Van Leer's plans for Georgia Tech. They perceived what he wanted as being in the arena of vocational education and trade school programs. Such programs were considered inferior to college-level academic programs, and outside the area of supervision by the State University System. The Regents were also dealing with limited funds and an already expanding professional program at Georgia Tech, as well as building activities to accommodate enrollment surges around the state.²⁵ Because of the agricultural tradition in the South, and a lack of knowledge about the technical institute movement, even many in industry were unaware of what resources technical institutes offered. To deal with these problems, in December 1945, Van Leer obtained a booklet on technical institute education from Purdue University which he sent to each member of the Board of Regents.²⁶ In addition, speaking opportunities and newspaper articles were used to introduce the program, define what a technical institute education would mean, and urge creation of such a program in Georgia.

Georgia Tech also initiated technical institute-level training during the 1946-47 academic year through the Evening School of the Engineering Extension Division.²⁷ Begun as the Night School in 1908 to offer non-credit trade school classes to the Atlanta community utilizing Georgia Tech's facilities, this program had expanded by adding credit courses, remedial classes, industrial education, and short

²⁴Report of the Committee to Van Leer, 7 August 1945. GTA, PF, TI.

²⁵McMath, p. 232, 252-258.

²⁶Van Leer to Dean A. A. Potter (Purdue University), 13 December 1945; Van Leer to Beaver, Brock, Ellis, Gilbert, Smith, 20 December 1945. GTA, PF, TI.

²⁷"Evening School Courses Information" Brochure, Georgia Tech, 1946-47. GTA, PF, TI; Tampa Tribune, 13 November 1956.

courses and conferences.²⁸ During the war, special training programs were added to its offerings to provide practical technical training for civilian personnel working in the industrial war effort.²⁹ Subjects taught in the Evening School ranged from the practical to the theoretical and the department could readily be expanded to include technical institute-level training. Also, the Evening School was regarded as completely separate from Tech's day school. Enrolled students were not regarded as Georgia Tech students and were therefore ineligible for participation in Tech's athletic programs and social scene (e.g., intercollegiate football or fraternities). Nevertheless, during the war years the Evening School was so successful that it returned a financial surplus to Georgia Tech, helping build a contingency fund.

After the war, the Evening School became a section of the newly organized Engineering Extension Division under Professor R. S. Howell. Because it remained separate from Tech's day school, while offering a variety of credit and non-credit courses, this division was an appropriate location for a technical institute program and did not require direct authorization from the Regents. The programs of study offered in this fashion included Applied Aeronautics, Building Construction, Electrical Technician, Heating and Ventilation, Mechanical Technician, Radio Technician, Safety Engineering, Surveying and Construction, and Textiles.³⁰

The technical institute program of the Engineering Extension Division Evening School would continue through the 1950s, but was not really capable of meeting industries' demand for technicians. Even during the most intense period of industrial need, enrollment was less than 300 in the program for an entire academic year.³¹ In addition, the students' sense of emotional distance, of not being considered part of the Georgia Tech "family" even when attending courses on the Georgia Tech campus, and of studying after a day of work, made the program through the Evening School less than successful. Furthermore, for veterans trying to satisfy the G. I. Bill requirements, the Evening School technical institute program involved at least three years of study, and classes might not "make," which lent a degree of uncertainty to

²⁸Expansion occurred beginning in 1919 and again in 1922, so that the program was eventually renamed the Evening School of Applied Science.

²⁹McMath, p. 211.

³⁰"Evening School Courses Information Brochure, 1946-1947". GTA, PF, TI.

³¹President's Report, 1950-1951. GTA, PF.

participation.³² What Tech needed, what industry needed was a residential, day school technical institute program alongside Tech's other programs.

The successful building program begun on the Georgia Tech campus in 1946 meant that by fall quarter 1947 it would be possible to house, feed, and instruct all of Tech's students at the main campus. Thus the Naval Air Station facilities would no longer be required and would need to be restored to their former state and returned to the Navy. Since this site had previously been considered as a possible location for a technical institute, and with the Evening School program not proving adequate, a new urgency arose to revisit the technical institute issue. By April 1947, efforts to establish a technical institute reintensified as President Van Leer made repeated contacts with the Chancellor and members of the Board of Regents. A Committee on Vocational Technical Institutes looked at the Naval Air Station site in Chamblee, and a joint AIG-Georgia Tech Committee worked to cultivate support on the part of Georgia industries. To the Chancellor and Regents, Van Leer pointed out the immediacy of the issue, and since Tech had already been using Naval Air Station facilities, it already had a "going educational institution" located at the site.³³

Following the report of the Committee on Vocational Technical Institutes, Van Leer forwarded copies to each Regent and to the Chancellor.³⁴ He also involved leaders in Georgia industry, relying on the Associated Industries of Georgia and influential Tech alumni to contact the Board of Regents regarding the need for a technical institute.³⁵ In a further inducement, he sought to craft the technical institute as a joint venture with the Board of Education (though funding issues ultimately prevented this from succeeding) and assured the Regents that the new school would be self-supporting within three years.³⁶

³²AJ, 21 March 1948. The technician course is said to be a three-year program leading to a certificate. Especially in the Evening School, financial considerations established a predetermined number of students for each class. Those lacking this number in enrollment were cancelled.

³³Van Leer to Paty, 3 April 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁴Van Leer to Beaver, 23 April 1947; Van Leer to Paty, 24 April 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁵Van Leer to A. D. Kennedy, 29 April 1947; F. Neely to Van Leer, 3 May 1947; Van Leer to R. L. Ellis, 13 May 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁶M. D. Collins to Van Leer, 9 April 1947; Van Leer to Paty, 24 April 1947; Van Leer to Collins, 24 April 1947. GTA, PF, TI. Director Johnson was of the opinion that the promise of self-support was perhaps the one great mistake Van Leer made in trying to set up The Technical Institute, and one which took years for the school to overcome. It is, however, not clear that the project would ever have been approved without this promise. Only after the move to Cobb County, in 1961, does it appear that

Van Leer found significant resistance remained on the part of the Regents as well as within the Tech administration. Regent Sandy Beaver, especially, urged Van Leer to focus on "developing a truly great college of engineering--leaving technical institutes either to an expanded public high school . . . or a separate institution on the junior college level."³⁷ Having seen R. S. Howell's preliminary figures for the technical institute budget, Robert Strite, Georgia Tech's Comptroller, cautioned that the figures might be low and questioned whether the Navy would cooperate in the venture. In addition, from previous experience, it was known that the Mess Hall was already a problem, and income estimates were based on veteran enrollment, a pool of students which would begin evaporating within another two to three years.³⁸

Nevertheless, Van Leer persevered. When Chancellor Paty had been president of the University of Alabama he had advocated a similar program there, and a vast array of business and industry leaders were by this time supporting the initiative.³⁹ Furthermore, the report of the Vocational Technical Institute Committee had indicated the new school would need only nine buildings, most of which Georgia Tech had already been leasing from the Navy for use in its temporary arrangements. Thus, with limited remodeling there would be dormitory and dining facilities, as well as classroom, laboratory, administrative, and support facilities (e.g., a bookstore) available for the new school.⁴⁰ The suggested academic program would be parallel to, but separate from, the technical institute program already being offered through the Evening School. Curricula recommended by the committee included: Applied Aeronautics Maintenance, Building Construction, Electrical Technician, Heating and Ventilating Technician, Industrial Technology, Mechanical Technician, Radio and Electronics, and Textile Technology.⁴¹ Each program was to be two years in length with an average 25 classroom or laboratory hours per week. The recommendation, if adopted by the Regents, would also avoid the high cost of restoring the buildings before returning them to the Navy.

this issue really no longer plagued the school.

³⁷Beaver to Van Leer, 25 April 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁸Strite to Van Leer, 4 April 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁹Van Leer to Paty, 29 April 1947. GTA, PF, TI. It should be noted that this was a new Chancellor, not the one with whom Van Leer dealt in 1944-45.

⁴⁰Report of the Committee to Van Leer, 10 April 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴¹Ibid.

In response to the groundswell of support for a technical institute which surrounded the Regents, they appointed a committee to study the establishment of such a program at the Naval Air Station and bring their report to the June meeting.⁴² Acting on this decision, Van Leer instructed his comptroller that "no steps should be taken to inform the Navy that we shall release the use of these properties for the fall term until further instructions."⁴³ Anticipating the Board's sluggish action on the issue, Van Leer had already been compiling statements of support which he now sent to the members of the Regents' Committee.⁴⁴ As Van Leer made himself available to address any questions the Committee or individual Regents might have, he remained in close communication with leaders in Georgia's industries, encouraging them to continue their lobbying efforts with the Regents.⁴⁵

In early June, just days before the Regents were to consider the proposal to establish a technical institute, the Associated Industries of Georgia formally endorsed the proposal and notified the Regents of the action they had taken.⁴⁶ The report of the Regents' Committee was favorable, acknowledging both the need for a technical institute program and the timely opportunity available to the University System to acquire facilities appropriate to house the school at minimal expense. The Committee recommended that Tech, through its Engineering Extension Division "establish a vocational technical institute of college grade . . . [and] grant to those successfully completing the courses certificates indicating their proficiency."⁴⁷ They recommended that the school be called Atlanta Polytechnic Institute. The committee also proposed a budget not to exceed \$157,700 for the academic year 1947-48, the money coming from students' fees, surplus income of the Extension Division, and other Georgia Tech

⁴²Siebert to Van Leer, 9 May 1947; Siebert to Members of the Tech [sic] Institute Committee (Ellis, Chairman, C. J. Callaway, Chancellor Paty, Marion Smith), 19 May 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴³Van Leer to Strite, 10 May 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴⁴Van Leer to Ellis, 13 May 1947; Van Leer to Pay, 13 May 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴⁵Van Leer to Ellis, 20 May 1947; AIG (Kennedy and Vinson) to Marion Smith, 4 June 1947; Kennedy to Van Leer, 5 June 1947; Kennedy to Holt, 5 June 1947; Van Leer to Kennedy, 9 June 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴⁶Kennedy and Vinson to Board of Regents, 5 June 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴⁷Report of Committee to Marion Smith (Chairman, Board of Regents), undated. GTA, PF, TI.

surpluses.⁴⁸ On June 11, 1947, the Regents received the report of the committee and authorized Georgia Tech to establish a vocational technical institute at the Naval Air Station "provided that a satisfactory lease may be made with the Navy."⁴⁹ The Chancellor and Van Leer were to work out funding for the school, which would then be considered at the next meeting; and the school was left unnamed.⁵⁰

Perhaps no more vexing issue has dogged Southern Tech throughout its history than that of funding. As Van Leer pointed out to the Regents in his annual report for 1945, only medicine exceeded engineering in cost of education.⁵¹ The large number of laboratories and the lower student-teacher ratios required for laboratory classes multiply the costs over simple classroom situations. The Regents had already spent a considerable sum for upgrading Georgia Tech's programs and were reluctant to approve state funds for what they perceived as an inferior program. Their sustained reluctance resulted in the further resurgence of efforts by supporters of the technical institute to win funding for it including Van Leer's indication that The Technical Institute (as the school was first named) would quickly become self-sustaining.⁵² Proposed budgets were revised over and over; influential Tech alumnus Frank Neely suggested that Tech's alumni might take over responsibility for the entire Engineering Extension Division, thereby removing it from all University System control; and the media were enlisted to bring further pressure on the Regents.⁵³ Finally, at the Regents' September meeting it was resolved that a supplemental allocation of \$60,000 would be made to Georgia Tech's budget for the year ending June 30, 1948 for the purpose of establishing a technical institute at Chamblee, provided Chancellor Paty

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 11 June 1947. GTA, PF, TI. It was expressly noted that Regent Sandy Beaver voted "no" on the proposal.

⁵⁰Siebert to Van Leer, 13 June 1947. GTA, PF, TI. Paty and Van Leer were encouraged to seek outside funding. Extension Division profits were expressly withheld by Board action.

⁵¹Annual Report for 1944-1945, p. 23. GTA, Presidential Files.

⁵²Report of Committee to Marion Smith, item 4, undated. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵³Neely to Paty, 7 July 1947; Van Leer to Paty, 8 July 1947; Van Leer to Paty, 16 July 1947; Siebert to Van Leer, 31 July 1947; Howell to Van Leer, 6 September 1947; Van Leer to Paty, 9 September 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

and Van Leer could negotiate a satisfactory contract with the Navy.⁵⁴

Negotiations with the Navy actually had been initiated in June, once approval in principle had been given to establish The Technical Institute. A revocable lease on the facilities had been signed in January 1947, but it did not cover the new use to which Tech intended to put the facilities.⁵⁵ However, on June 26, the Navy was contacted concerning Tech's intended use for the Naval Air Station facilities it had been leasing, describing which of the buildings Tech continued to desire to use, and the proposed changes necessary to prepare them for use.⁵⁶ The lease was approved without question, the buildings being "excess to the present mission of the station." The commanding officer of the Naval Air Station noted that the training would be good background for potential Naval Reserve personnel.⁵⁷ Naval endorsements supported the proposal and provided assurance that these facilities would continue to be available for the minimum three-year period which the Regents required. At their October meeting, the Regents authorized Georgia Tech to continue to lease from the Navy nine buildings at the Atlanta Naval Air Station in Chamblee to establish The Technical Institute.⁵⁸

While Regents approval to establish a technical institute represented the culmination of a long process, it was the beginning of another almost more difficult process spanning the next several years. Creating The Technical Institute meant the appointment of administration, staff, and faculty personnel, developing detailed curricula based on a realistic assessment of needs in industry and the capabilities of the program, faculty preparation, and organizational details. The search for a director had already ended by October. Van Leer had originally intended to appoint Mr. L. A. Moll as the Director.⁵⁹ When this was unsuccessful, he recommended the appointment of Colonel R. W. Mayer, who had supervised the vocational and

⁵⁴Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 10 September 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁵Revocable Permit, 6 January 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁶Commanding Officer (NAS, Chamblee) to Secretary of the Navy, 12 July 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁷Commanding Officer to Secretary of the Navy, 12 July 1947. GTA, PF, TI. The only exception was the possible conversion of two buildings from married enlisted men's quarters, leaving nine buildings available without question.

⁵⁸Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 8 October 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁹Van Leer to R. W. Mayer, 3 May 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

technical schools of the Army Quartermaster's Corps during World War II.⁶⁰ When this fell through, Van Leer recommended Professor Lawrence V. Johnson of the Tech faculty for the position.⁶¹

Professor Johnson had joined the faculty of Georgia Tech as an instructor in Physics in 1931, after completing graduate degrees in engineering and physics. During World War II he was coordinator of the Civil Aeronautics War Training Service at Georgia Tech (1940-43) and Director of Tech's Guggenheim School of Aeronautics (1943-45). After a leave of absence to teach at the American University in Biarritz, France, he returned as an Associate Professor in the Aeronautical Department. He was a member of the Vocational Technical Institute Committee in 1947, while serving as acting department chairman in Aeronautics.⁶² His appointment as Director was effective October 15, 1947, by which time he had already located temporary office space in an old house near the Naval Air Station.⁶³

Remodeling of the facilities began shortly after the Regents' approval of Johnson's appointment. In November a crew directed by J. M. Davis started creating the dormitories, offices, and other facilities.⁶⁴ The original date projected for opening The Technical Institute had been January 1, 1948.⁶⁵ The slower-than-expected approval process made this date unrealistic, but Johnson rapidly assembled the necessary personnel and initiated the renovation of the Naval Air Station facilities in preparation for a spring quarter opening. Laboratory equipment was obtained from a variety of sources. Tech was in the process of taking over certain buildings at the Marietta Air Base/Bell Bomber Plant. The old machine tools there were too good to dispose of so they were transferred for use by The Technical Institute. Robert Sarbacher, formerly a member of Georgia Tech's administration, was currently serving

⁶⁰Van Leer to Paty, 16 July 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶¹J. R. Anthony to Van Leer, 17 September 1947. GTA, Emerson Papers.

⁶²L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 20 June 1947. GTA, Emerson Papers. This was his letter requesting consideration for the position as Director of The Technical Institute.

⁶³Paty to Van Leer, 2 October 1947; Van Leer to Johnson, 14 October 1947. GTA, Emerson Papers. The location of the house was at 383 Ponce de Leon Way.

⁶⁴Annual Report, 27 April 1948. STA.

⁶⁵Van Leer to Paty, 16 July 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

as a member of the Advisory Council to the War Assets Administration.⁶⁶ He had been involved in helping plan the technical institute program and offered to assist in equipping The Technical Institute, where it was possible, through war surplus distributions.⁶⁷ Some equipment could also be obtained more quickly, more cheaply, and would be better suited to the school's use by having it built on site. In February 1948, C. A. Arnston and C. R. Orvold were hired as Technical Specialists for this purpose, as well as to teach Mechanical Drawing and Shop once classes began.⁶⁸

Publicity was another major issue with which the new school had to deal. Effective January 1, 1948, John D. Sewell was appointed Assistant to the Director and given control of publicity.⁶⁹ Tuition had been fixed at a rate slightly higher than for Georgia Tech's regular day students, and once decisions regarding curricula, calendar, and administration were made, catalogues and brochures were prepared.⁷⁰ During the early months of 1948, representatives of The Technical Institute personally appeared at 85 high schools throughout the state, including 17 in the Atlanta area.⁷¹ Advertising was purchased in most of the leading newspapers in Georgia. High school papers carried notices, two radio broadcasts were made, and twenty articles or news items were published about The Technical Institute. President Van Leer made several speeches on the school's behalf, and in late February the Associated Industries of Georgia sent a letter to "All Georgia Industries" asking their cooperation with the

⁶⁶The War Assets Administration was responsible, among other things, for handling and disbursing surplus inventory accumulated by the federal government in support of US involvement in World War II.

⁶⁷Emerson to Van Leer, 2 September 1947; Sarbacher to Van Leer, 29 September 1947; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 3 October 1947; Van Leer to Sarbacher, 6 October 1947. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶⁸Annual Report, 27 April 1948 (Southern Tech Archives, hereafter, STA). L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 5 January 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶⁹Annual Report, 27 April 1948. STA.

⁷⁰Van Leer to Paty, 1 December 1947; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 1 December 1947; Paty to Van Leer, 8 December 1947; Van Leer to Pay, 12 December 1947. GTA, PF, TI. The cost for non-resident students was to be \$75.00 at The Technical Institute, while for Georgia Tech students the cost for tuition per quarter was \$57.50 for non-residents.

⁷¹Annual Report, 27 April 1948. STA; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 23 January 1948; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 13 February 1948; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 21 February 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

new school while providing background to explain its goals and programs.⁷²

On March 24, 1948, The Technical Institute held its first registration. The day was celebrated with an open house and luncheon for Chancellor Paty, President Van Leer, invited Regents, members of the Vocational Technical Institute Committee, officers of the Associated Industries of Georgia, and leaders of research and industry in the South. It was recorded and later transmitted over Atlanta's WGST radio. Georgia had almost waited until it was too late to start a technical institute. Within a matter of a few years, other technical institutes were developing in every state with a border contiguous to that of Georgia. Had the process moved more swiftly, The Technical Institute would almost certainly have been larger and its impact more profound. Yet, at the time the idea was new, and many had doubts about where such a program might go. Its coursework was at the cutting edge of technology and like engineering, subject to rapid changes both in the professional realm as well as the political and economic climate. Unlike engineering, however, the program was interdisciplinary and therefore, though essential to industry, it was also subject to misunderstanding by all related disciplines.

When The Technical Institute opened, its greatest assets and strengths lay in the quality and spirit of its director and faculty, the understanding and cooperation of superiors at Georgia Tech, and the support of industry.⁷³ President Van Leer considered the creation of The Technical Institute under the auspices of Georgia Tech one of the significant achievements of his presidency at Georgia Tech.⁷⁴ In ensuing years the new school would establish a strong reputation for the quality of its technological education, thereby proving the confidence of those who labored to establish the institution.

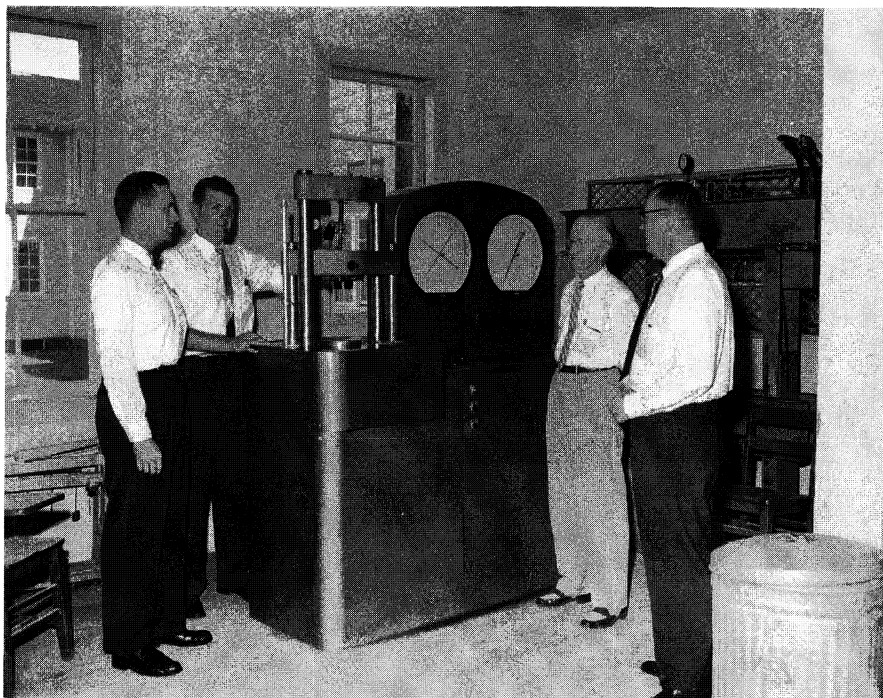
⁷²J. L. Harrison (President, AIG) to All Georgia Industries, 23 February 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷³Annual Report, 27 April 1948. STA. Remarks by Professor Hans A. Troemel at eulogy for L. V. Johnson, 3 August 1997. L. V. Johnson died 13 June 1997.

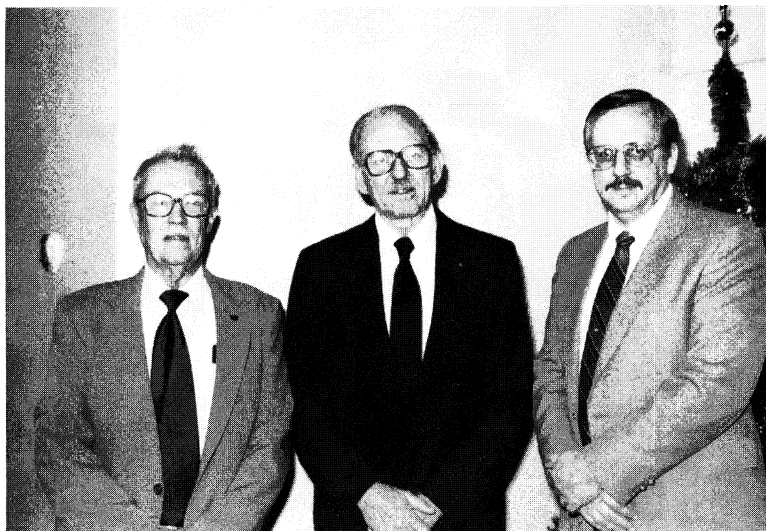
⁷⁴AJC, 24 November 1955 and Detroit Free Press, 15 November 1955. These report on a speech Van Leer made to the American Association of Land Grant Colleges at Michigan State University. Emerson to Van Leer, 1 December 1948. GTA, PF, TI. Emerson refers to The Technical Institute as "Van Leer's baby."



Director L. V. Johnson in his office at Chamblee, c. 1952



Inspecting a new Universal Test Machine, c. 1952. Standing to the right of the machine are R. S. Howell and L. V. Johnson



The present and former leadership of Southern Tech at a Christmas gathering in the 1980s. L to R: L. V. Johnson, Hoyt McClure, Stephen R. Cheshier

Chapter Two

Defining A Technician

The opening of the first technical institute in the South on March 24, 1948, was the capstone of a tremendous effort by Georgia Tech and the Associated Industries of Georgia to sell the Chancellor and Board of Regents on the program, but the bigger job was still to come. Regents' support was still tentative, and even southern industry itself was unclear about the new program. Opening any new educational institution is difficult, and The Technical Institute was fortunate to be under the auspices of an established and respected institution. But success would require more than simply attracting students. It was also necessary for Technical Institute officials both to define the profession of "technician" for which they were preparing students and then sell the concept to industry, prospective students, and wary Regents.

The goals of The Technical Institute were to train young men, enabling them to improve their productive and earning power and to supply technically equipped manpower needed for the growth of Georgia's industries. During the first decade of the new school's existence, officials traveled the length and breadth of the state of Georgia to define what "technician" meant: one who is able to work with the ideas and materials of his profession and to put these ideas and materials into concrete form. Training was less manual than in a vocational school and less theoretical than in an engineering curriculum. Ultimately, however, the first graduating classes of The Technical Institute gave flesh and substance to these ideas. Their roles in industry and their successful careers quickly made the school a national leader in technical institute training.

As the excitement of opening day passed, 116 students had registered for the spring quarter at The Technical Institute, including one young woman, Barbara Hudson.¹ Five possible programs of study were initially offered (out of a planned 10 curricula option), taught by an administration and faculty numbering 15, most of whom had joined the school after March 1, 1948.² With technical institute education

¹AJ, 7 November 1948.

²Annual Report, April 27, 1948. STA. The five operational programs included Building Construction Technology; Electrical Technology; Electronics and Radio Technology; Mechanical Technology; and Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning Technology. The others being planned were Industrial Safety Technology, Production and Supervision Technology, Surveying, Textile Technology, and Aeronautical Technology. Eventually some form of all but the last program of study would be offered at the school.

still in the developmental stage nationally, curriculum materials often had to be developed by the instructors. Because of the practical emphasis, many faculty were drawn from industrial arts programs for which they possessed a B.S. degree in their academic field and practical "hands-on" industrial experience, rather than advanced or graduate degrees.³ The first laboratory classes sometimes also installed laboratory equipment that later classes would use. Campus dormitory facilities were created out of former bachelor officer quarters at the Naval Air Station.⁴ Classes were conducted daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. plus half a day on Saturday. Even with this intense academic regimen and the typical problems associated with institutional infancy, the rapport among faculty and students was strong; there was a sense of "building something together."⁵

If identity was the major external problem facing the school, the major internal problem was financing. Careful management of material and personnel resources had successfully enabled L. V. Johnson and his team to put together all the necessary elements to get the school open. However many laboratories were still incomplete, and program options remained unavailable because of these incomplete laboratories or because of insufficient funds to hire additional faculty. Initial enrollment, though respectable for a new venture, was well short of the expected 150 to 200 students indicated by projections from early March.⁶ In an effort to stimulate prospective student interest, a scholarship contest was proposed to the Chancellor in April, in time to help the summer quarter enrollment. Students would be invited to complete, in 50 words or less, the statement, "I am enrolling at The Technical Institute because . . ."⁷ Though the proposal was rejected by the Chancellor's office, it was developed through private funding, the first winner being Mr. David Summers.⁸

The program of The Technical Institute generated its own need for additional

³Interview with Professor Edward G. Muller (Retired), 6 February 1995.

⁴L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 18 March 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵Muller Interview, 6 February 1995.

⁶L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 8 March 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 1 April 1948; Van Leer to Paty, 3 April 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸Paty to Van Leer, 6 April 1948. GTA, PF, TI. The money was provided through A. D. Kennedy of Davidson-Kennedy Company, and W. H. Wilkerson of the Auto-Solor Company. L. V. Johnson to Kennedy, 12 April 1948. GTA, PF, TI. As many graduates know, Mr. Summers eventually would teach at the school, heading the Electrical Engineering Technology Department for many years.

funding as well. The intensity of study needed to be balanced for students through such activities as organized sports, publications, and student organizations. During the summer quarter of 1948, Professor Frank Johnson, Head of Industrial Safety and Production, proposed a varsity and intramural athletic program with basketball as the principal sport.⁹ Others were interested in developing a school paper, a yearbook, a glee club, and professional or hobby clubs. Though L. V. Johnson sought support from Georgia Tech for the athletic program, the final answer to funding such activities lay in assessing a \$5.00 student activity fee at registration.¹⁰ With this fee, a variety of clubs and small athletic programs were subsequently funded, along with a campus newspaper and yearbook, both of which have been continuously published since 1948.¹¹ The athletic program led to the first expansion of campus facilities. The nine original buildings made no provision for athletics, but adjacent to the Naval Air Station was the Lawson Veterans Administration Hospital.¹² Associated with the hospital was an unused gymnasium. Hospital officials were eager to have the gymnasium used, and an agreement with The Technical Institute was quickly reached to transfer control of the facility to The Technical Institute for student use.¹³ A fence with a separate entrance was constructed in order to separate the gymnasium from the hospital facility.¹⁴

During the academic years 1948-49 and 1949-50, The Technical institute continued to refine its programs. Industrial Safety and Production was merged into Industrial Management Technology, and Aeronautical Technology was eliminated as a possible option due to a lack of job opportunities and to the expense of its

⁹Proposal by Frank Johnson, 30 June 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁰L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 6 July 1948; Van Leer to Alexander, 9 July 1948; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 29 July 1948; Paty to Van Leer, 11 August 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹Annual Report, 10 May 1949. STA. Professor G. L. Carroll served as chief advisor for these publications. Both won literary awards during their first years of publication. Annual Report, 14 June 1951; Annual Report, 19 July 1955. STA. North Dekalb Record and Norcross News, 29 April 1954; AJ, 3 May 1955.

¹²Hereafter referred to as the Lawson Hospital.

¹³L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 13 August 1948; Van Leer to Slaton, 17 August 1948; L. V. Johnson to R. S. Howell, 10 September 1948. GTA, Emerson Files (Southern Tech).

¹⁴The Technician, October 1948. STA.

laboratories.¹⁵ In September 1948, the welding and machine shop facilities were operational, and by January, wood, sheet metal, and air-conditioning laboratories were in use.¹⁶ In October 1948, the upper floor of one building was renovated to create an auditorium capable of accommodating the entire student body.¹⁷ Also in October, students with a "B" average at the end of the summer quarter established an honor society later to be named Tau Alpha Pi.¹⁸ It has since become the national honor society for Engineering Technology, with chapters across the United States.¹⁹

In March 1949, the Liquid Petroleum (LP) Gas Association conducted a short training course on the campus of The Technical Institute.²⁰ The conference brought 190 servicemen to campus to learn the LP gas business, from chemical properties to proper pipe-fitting and tank and appliance installation. Between 1923 and 1948, the LP gas business had multiplied 10,000%, and this course was part of the industry's attempt to provide some structure and preparation for employees. Top industry specialists had jointly prepared the course with faculty of The Technical Institute and were so impressed with the result that a long-term relationship was subsequently established. By April 1949, an option in LP Gas Technology had been created for students in the Heating and Ventilation program.²¹ The program was set up at very little cost to the Institute, because industry supplied the laboratory equipment. It was to be first offered in September 1949, providing 50 students would enroll. There were fewer than 10 enrollees in the program during the fall quarter.²² However, by the following quarter, after advertisements had been placed in journals and newsletters,

¹⁵The Technician, September 1948. STA.

¹⁶The Technician, October 1948. STA.

¹⁷The Technician, November 1948. STA.

¹⁸The Technician, November 1948. STA.

¹⁹The Technician, January 1949. STA.

²⁰The Technician, March 1949; Annual Report, 10 May 1949. STA. The conference was held 21-24 March 1949.

²¹L. V. Johnson to R. S. Howell, 25 April 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers (Southern Tech). It became a separate department in 1951-1952 and remained so until it was phased out in the 1967-1968 academic year.

²²The Lennox News, September 1950. STA.

enrollment in the program rose to 46 students.²³ The LP Gas Association subsequently endorsed this program as the only official one in the United States.²⁴ To further ensure a continued student body for the program, scholarships and loans were made available across the United States to those who would enroll in the program.²⁵ During the almost 30 years this program was offered, many hundreds of LP gas technicians were graduated. This provided the manpower needed by the LP gas industry and gave The Technical Institute national visibility and an important public relations boost.

One of the most significant steps The Technical Institute could take to establish itself nationally, however, was to be accredited by the Engineers Council for Professional Development (ECPD). Unlike regional accrediting agencies, which accredit schools, the ECPD accredited individual programs.²⁶ Such a goal for The Technical Institute had been planned by Van Leer even before its opening. In September 1948, though the school was only six months old and had yet to graduate any students, Van Leer instructed L. V. Johnson that he ". . . would like to swing into that column of accredited institutions as soon as possible."²⁷ He informed Johnson that of the nine men on the committee who would be evaluating The Technical Institute for accreditation, he was responsible for five, ". . . so when the proper time come [sic], we should be able to get along."²⁸ Johnson was, of course, aware of the importance and prestige associated with accreditation - of 82 technical institutes in the United States, fewer than twenty were accredited. But he was also concerned about the school's immediate needs: laboratories, shops, and a library, all of which the accreditation team would inspect, and might consider deficient. He suggested patience and communication with the accreditation committee.²⁹

With Van Leer's concern to move forward on accreditation as quickly as

²³AC, 13 November 1950.

²⁴Annual Report, 10 May 1949. STA.

²⁵Who & What, August 1950. STA; L. V. Johnson to J. H. Anthony, 23 July 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

²⁶The Technical Institute, as part of Georgia Tech, came under the umbrella of the parent school's accreditation.

²⁷Van Leer to L. V. Johnson, 7 September 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 14 September 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

possible and to strengthen the Institute's program, it was decided that Dean H. P. Hammond of Pennsylvania State College would be invited to visit the campus and offer his suggestions.³⁰ As a member of the accreditation inspection team, he was hesitant to visit The Technical Institute lest it potentially prejudice his subsequent role regarding the school's accreditation.³¹ However, both Johnson and Van Leer assured Hammond that any move for accreditation was yet future (and Hammond might not be on the visitation team at that time), and that it was his advice that was being sought.³² Dean Hammond subsequently agreed, visiting the campus April 13-15, 1949. He reported finding the school ". . . in an exceptionally well advance State [sic] of effective operation."³³ Of the various curricula, he singled out the Heating and Ventilation department as being the least equipped (this was, of course, before the development of the LP Gas option), and encouraged the school to get the forms necessary to begin the accreditation process.³⁴ On September 20-21, 1949, the accreditation team conducted its inspection of The Technical Institute.³⁵ When results were presented to the ECPD committee at its meeting on October 28, 1949, all of the programs were accredited for five years except Heating and Ventilation, which was accredited for only two years.³⁶

During the accreditation process and after several months of discussion among faculty, students, and the AIG, a new name was proposed for the school:

³⁰L. V. Johnson to Hammond, 23 January 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers (Southern Tech). Dean Hammond had been responsible for the formation of the ECPD and had fought hard to get standards for accreditation enacted by that body. These standards were established in 1946.

³¹Hammond to L. V. Johnson, 2 February 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers.

³²L. V. Johnson to Hammond, 14 February 1949; Van Leer to Hammond, 16 February 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

³³Hammond to Van Leer, 19 April 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁴Ibid.; also, L. V. Johnson to K. L. Holderman, 18 April 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers.

³⁵L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 19 August 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers.

³⁶Tyler to L. V. Johnson, 1 November 1949; L. V. Johnson to Caldwell, 7 November 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers. The team members included E. H. Rietake, Chair, Capitol Radio Engineering Institute; Richard P. Calhoon, University of North Carolina; Dean J. E. Hannum, Dean of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute; and N. C. Ebaugh, Head, Mechanical Engineering Department, University of Florida.

Southern Technical Institute.³⁷ This name would clearly distinguish the school from its parent, Georgia Tech, while also emphasizing the type of program being offered. At its meeting on May 12, 1949, the Board of Regents authorized the name change.³⁸ Thus, it was as the Southern Technical Institute that the first graduation was held on September 6, 1949, with 55 students participating.³⁹ Accreditation by the ECPD had to wait, in fact, until after this first graduation because one of the requirements was that the school have graduates working in industry.

Despite its apparent successes, the role of the Southern Technical Institute continued to remain unclear to the Board of Regents, resulting in serious funding problems. In March 1949, President Van Leer suggested to R. D. Harvey, President of the Cotton Manufacturers Association, that a committee be formed to work with The Technical Institute to develop a program meeting their needs.⁴⁰ By July, a committee from the Cotton Manufacturers Association began working with Southern Technical Institute faculty to develop a curriculum and to obtain the necessary funding.⁴¹ In November, a target date of summer quarter 1950 was established to initiate the option.⁴² Use of an additional building to house the laboratories and shops for the program was approved by the Navy, the curriculum was prepared, and \$60,000 in equipment for the laboratory was made available.⁴³ However, the Regents refused to match this with another \$60,000, in order to implement the new option.⁴⁴

³⁷L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 5 May 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁸Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 12 May 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁹Commencement Program, 6 September 1949. STA. Twin brothers, James H. and Lawrence G. Dewberry were among these first graduates.

⁴⁰Van Leer to R. D. Harvey, 17 March 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers. A Textile option had been planned for the school but never previously made available to students.

⁴¹Forbes to Van Leer, 6 July 1949; Minutes of Technical Education Committee, 1 September 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers.

⁴²Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the Cotton Manufacturers Association and Georgia Tech, 11 November 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers.

⁴³L. V. Johnson to R. S. Howell, 7 April 1949; Van Leer to Captain Parker, 14 April 1949; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 18 April 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers.

⁴⁴Annual Report, 21 April 1950. STA; Siebert to Van Leer, 20 January 1950 (reporting on the Board denial of 18 January). STA

Following another year of struggle to gain funding the school abandoned the Textile option.⁴⁵

Failure to fund a Textile option was but one event in the struggle between Georgia Tech and the Board of Regents over funding, as well as over the new school's identity. As early as Fall Quarter 1948, Van Leer began asking for some definitive statement of Regent's policy regarding the new technical institute.⁴⁶ He had already expressed his concern to the Chancellor that without better financial support, the venture would perish.⁴⁷ The amount then needed to complete the shops and laboratories for programs already offered by The Technical Institute was estimated at over \$100,000; while attempts were being made to solicit support from industry, it seemed that the Board of Regents could also be more forthcoming in their financial support.⁴⁸ At the time, the State Department of Education was spending approximately three times that amount on two new vocational trade schools it was creating.⁴⁹ Since the state was unable or unwilling to go further, Van Leer got approval to transfer \$25,000 per quarter to The Technical Institute from Georgia Tech's contingency funds. But after the first disbursement, the budget director deferred further transfers until a policy statement from the Regents was issued.⁵⁰

In January 1949, in response to a firm stand taken by the Chancellor, the Board of Regents approved an immediate transfer of \$35,000 to The Technical Institute from Georgia Tech's contingency funds and authorized expenditure of up to an additional \$40,000 as necessary.⁵¹ The additional resources enabled The Technical Institute to increase to 19 the number of laboratories in full or partial operation (up

⁴⁵ Annual Report, 14 June 1951. STA. The option, however, was subsequently implemented during the 1955-1956 academic year.

⁴⁶ Van Leer to Caldwell, 24 November 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴⁷ Van Leer to Paty, 2 July 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴⁸ Van Leer to Anthony, 18 August 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴⁹ L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 18 October 1948. GTA, PF, TI. This argument may have been damaging to the school since some Regents felt that it, too, was a trade school, and should not be funded by the University System.

⁵⁰ Van Leer to Caldwell, 24 November 1948. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵¹ Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 12 January 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

from two).⁵² It was only a temporary measure, however, as more laboratories and shops were still needed, as well as funds for maintenance and updating of existing ones. Continued inadequate funding eventually necessitated cutting five budget positions for the 1949-50 academic year. Furthermore, L. V. Johnson had been informed by some officials that he should expect no additional help either from the state (i.e., the Regents) or from Georgia Tech.⁵³

In addition to the hesitancy to invest state money in a project the Regents believed to be a trade school program not properly under their jurisdiction, the Regents began questioning the leadership structure of the program as well. While the Strayer Commission report, issued in 1949, was very positive, recommending Southern Tech not only continue, but even increase its operations, it also recommended that the school report directly to the president of Georgia Tech rather than through the Engineering Extension Division.⁵⁴ This touched off a lengthy exchange involving Van Leer, the Associated Industries of Georgia, and the Regents. Essentially, Van Leer responded that the present organizational structure was satisfactory; if Southern Tech could receive adequate funding, it would become self-supporting through rapid growth.⁵⁵ The Associated Industries of Georgia also suggested that the problem with funding was limiting how far Southern Tech could develop, causing the loss of potential students, and thereby weakening the extent to which industries' needs were being met.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, in January 1950, responding to Regents concerns about the leadership of Southern Tech, Van Leer did partially reorganize the administrative structure.⁵⁷ Rather than easing the bureaucracy as the Strayer Commission report recommended, however, Van Leer created a standing Advisory Council to consider all matters related to Southern Tech. Only those things passed by the Council were to reach the president's desk. Still, this reorganization neither ended the doubts of the Regents nor did it lead to a definite Regents' policy

⁵²Annual Report, 10 May 1949. STA.

⁵³L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 18 August 1949. Caldwell to Van Leer, 26 August 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁴Report of the Strayer Commission, 1949. The Strayer Commission did an exhaustive study of the University System in 1949 under the Director of Survey, the Georgia State University System.

⁵⁵Beaver to Van Leer, 9 November 1949; Van Leer to Beaver, 10 November 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁶AIG to Caldwell, 29 November 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁷Van Leer to Caldwell, 12 January 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

regarding Southern Tech. When rumors subsequently arose that the Board of Regents might discontinue financial support for Southern Tech, Van Leer, the Associated Industries of Georgia, and the Regents again engaged in a protracted struggle over the issue.⁵⁸ Out of this came the first definitive statement of Regents' policy toward Southern Tech, however modest: the Regents would not abandon Southern Tech ". . . unless and until it has support equal to that which it is now receiving."⁵⁹ In spite of this policy statement, Regents' misgivings about the school's role in the University System continued, as did their belief that it should be completely self-supporting.⁶⁰

Complicating the situation between the Regents and Southern Tech, in 1950, the Korean War erupted, siphoning funds at the state and national levels for the war effort which might otherwise have supported education. At Southern Tech this translated into the deletion of all funds for capital equipment items from the current year's (1949-50) budget.⁶¹ Aggravating the situation, a national military draft took many young men from the very pool of potential students from which Southern Tech drew its enrollment. Although an official request for draft deferments for Southern Tech students was eventually approved,⁶² this approval came at the very time that GI Bill benefits were expiring for World War II veterans, and the state of Georgia was shifting from an eleven-year to a twelve-year primary and secondary school public education program. Combined, these resulted in a temporary decline in the size of the student body and a corresponding further loss of income.⁶³

Georgia Tech was also left reeling from the changes of 1950-51. In one

⁵⁸Van Leer to Beaver, 8 February 1950; Lambdin Kay (Secretary of the AIG) to Van Leer, 9 February 1950; Beaver to Van Leer, 10 February 1950; Van Leer to Lambdin Kay, 10 February 1950; Lambdin Kay to Beaver, Ellis, Morris, 13 February 1950; Van Leer to Smith, 13 February 1950; Van Leer to Beaver, 13 February 1950; Beaver to Van Leer, 15 February 1950; Fuller (Westinghouse Executive) to Beaver, Ellis, Morris, 15 February 1950; Ellis to O'Brien, 20 February 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁹Beaver to O'Brien, 13 February 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶⁰L. V. Johnson to Strayer, 27 March 1950. STA.

⁶¹Annual Report, 21 April 1950. STA.

⁶²Howell to Col. J. H. Skelton, Jr., 9 August 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶³For a discussion of these changes, see Joiner, Oscar H., ed. A History of Public Education in Georgia, 1734-1976. (Columbia, SC: The R. L. Bryan Co., 1979)

year, enrollment declined from 5000 to 3400 students.⁶⁴ This decline put enormous budgetary pressure on Van Leer and almost led to the closure of Southern Tech. In his campaign to persuade the Regents to establish a technical institute, Van Leer had projected that the school would be self-supporting within three years. Whether this might have been feasible with quick Regents' action and adequate funding, it was clearly not the case as Southern Tech entered its third year. L. V. Johnson recommended that if adequate funding could not be found after the "current slump," perhaps it would be best to close the school.⁶⁵ But in what was something of a power play between Van Leer and the Regents over funding for Georgia Tech and Southern Tech in early 1951, Van Leer suggested moving Southern Tech to the Georgia Tech campus instead. The lease with the Navy had expired in 1950, funding for Southern Tech remained inadequate, and Regents' support for the program was underwhelming at best. While research had expanded at Georgia Tech and space was actually at a premium, for the first time since 1945, it was possible to move Southern Tech to the Georgia Tech campus. This action would save an estimated \$144,000 in budget allotments after the initial cost of the move.⁶⁶ It is doubtful, however, that Van Leer intended to move or close the school; rather the situation was an opportunity to force Regents' action regarding Southern Tech.

In February 1951, Van Leer expressed to Caldwell his disappointment that the Chancellor's annual report made no mention of Southern Tech, while its growth and development was "one of the most outstanding things which has been accomplished within the University System in the past few years."⁶⁷ In early March 1951, Van Leer made a plea to Chancellor Caldwell to increase Georgia Tech's funding to a more proportionate share of University System authorization.⁶⁸ This was not a new issue on Van Leer's part. As early as 1945-46, he had called the Regents' attention to the disproportionate share of funding received by the University of Georgia at Athens and Georgia State University in Atlanta. As recently as December

⁶⁴Most other schools in the University System were co-ed by this time. Georgia Tech was almost exclusively male, which offered a potential for expanding enrollment which the school was not yet ready to pursue. The student body at Southern Tech, however, had been coed since the school opened.

⁶⁵Annual Report, 21 April 1950. STA. This projection of self-sufficiency had been part of Van Leer's propaganda campaign to sell the Regents on the program in 1947.

⁶⁶"Statement on the Southern Technical Institute," by Van Leer, 26 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶⁷Van Leer to Caldwell, 1 February 1951. STA.

⁶⁸Van Leer to Caldwell, 6 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

1950, Van Leer had even complained to the Atlanta media about funding, asserting that for the past four years, the Engineering Extension Division (including Southern Tech) had been supporting Georgia Tech.⁶⁹ This time however, a new twist was presented to the Regents. In his letter to Caldwell, Van Leer asserted that he decreased Southern Tech's budget \$61,000 (of an \$80,000 allocation) in order to meet Georgia Tech's budgetary needs. In a subsequent statement, L. V. Johnson explained that the Regents had already expressed the feeling that unless both Southern Tech and Georgia Tech could be operated on the (increased) allocation given Georgia Tech, Southern Tech should be closed.⁷⁰ Van Leer's exact intent is unclear. Certainly the message the Regents received was that Van Leer seemingly was appropriating funds intended for Southern Tech to provide for Georgia Tech's needs.⁷¹ However, other evidence suggests that there was considerably more to this. In August 1950, at the request of U.S. Government officials, an Emergency Plan Committee was created to outline the educational services Southern Tech could provide to meet military training needs, along with facility details.⁷² Just days before Van Leer's March 6 request to the Chancellor to move Southern Tech, a telegram was received by Georgia Tech inviting a proposal for Air Force contract training on the Southern Tech campus.⁷³ Van Leer did not hesitate to bid aggressively on this.⁷⁴ In addition, only weeks before, Van Leer had opened negotiations with the Navy to renew the lease on the Naval Air Station facility for Southern Tech under the same terms and conditions enjoyed during the previous four years.⁷⁵ While the official correspondence between

⁶⁹AC, 23 December 1950.

⁷⁰"Statement on the Southern Technical Institute," by L. V. Johnson, undated. STA. This undated document is in the papers dated February-April 1951 and clearly relates to the present issue.

⁷¹Harris to L. V. Johnson, 28 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI. This also seems to be the understanding of McMath, et al., in their recent history of Georgia Tech. See McMath, 255-6.

⁷²Report of the Emergency Plan Committee, 17 August 1950. GTA, Emerson Papers. It should be remembered that such educational services would be offered during a time of national emergency, the Korean War.

⁷³Telegram, McNeely to Georgia Tech, 28 February 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷⁴Telegram, Van Leer to Neely, 1 March 1951; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 6 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷⁵L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 2 February 1951; Van Leer to Anthony, 7 February 1951; Anthony to Greer, 12 February 1951. GTA, Emerson Files.

Van Leer and the Regents, and with the students at Southern Tech, reflected the likelihood of either a move or closure, it would seem Van Leer had little if any intention of following through on either of these possibilities. On March 10, 1951, Van Leer indicated his supposed intent to integrate Southern Tech into Georgia Tech effective with the start of the fall quarter.⁷⁶ Van Leer ordered his Executive Dean to begin preparations for the move and to prepare a budget. At the end of the winter quarter, Southern Tech students were notified of the contemplated closing of the Chamblee campus, and were promised that their remaining educational needs would be met on the Georgia Tech campus.⁷⁷

When the Board of Regents denied permission for Southern Tech to be moved to the Georgia Tech campus, ordered restoration to Southern Tech of the full \$80,000 allocation, and scathingly rebuked Van Leer for his actions, Van Leer threatened to close the school at the end of the academic year, June 30, if the Regents would not reconsider their position.⁷⁸ Since it had previously been the Regents' position that Georgia Tech should either operate the two schools out of the same budget allocation or close the technical institute program, Van Leer was effectively "calling their hand" on Regents' policy toward Southern Tech. When the school was established, it was to be supported by surplus funds from Georgia Tech, until it became self-supporting (in about two or three years), but the Regents had equivocated in authorizing Georgia Tech sufficient funds to provide for this to happen. Enrollment was lower than expected ever since the school opened (requiring University System funds to be expended to help support the program). The Regents' policies had held the school back, rendering it unable to offer all of the curriculum options intended, to hire and retain top faculty, and to meet industries' needs to the anticipated level. Members of the Board of Regents still felt the technical institute program was really a trade school not properly under their supervision, nor Georgia Tech's, though it had been accredited by the same agency that accredited Georgia Tech (the ECPD) and was even recognized by the U.S. Office of Education as an

⁷⁶Van Leer to Committee, 10 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷⁷Van Leer to Narmore, 16 March 1951; Van Leer to STI Students, 26 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI. It is noteworthy that the date for closure given to Southern Tech students was 30 June 1951, raising further the uncertainties over Van Leer's true intents, though this would have been the most natural time for a move.

⁷⁸Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 21 March 1951. STA. Van Leer to Spalding, 27 March 1951; Spalding to Van Leer, 28 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

accredited institution of higher learning.⁷⁹ In position papers drafted by L. V. Johnson and Van Leer, these issues were addressed in preparation for the move request to be reconsidered at the April Regents' meeting.⁸⁰

Since Chancellor Caldwell had previously affirmed that what Van Leer did concerning Southern Tech was an internal decision and Van Leer's prerogative, involvement of the Board of Regents in the decision clearly had a further purpose. It was pointed out to the Regents that closure of Southern Tech would require more funds than the budget allocation for the coming year; and while a move might eventually save about half the amount of Southern Tech's annual budget, it, too, came with an initial cost. Clearly, the message was that the best course of action for the Regents would be to support Southern Tech through an allocation separate from Georgia Tech. This is, in fact, what essentially resulted from the entire incident, and never, subsequently, did the Board consider closure of Southern Tech or its transfer to some other state jurisdiction.⁸¹ With a firm commitment by the Regents to support Southern Tech, Van Leer informed the Chancellor that he had changed his mind about closing Southern Tech and restored to it the full \$80,000 budget, although "to the detriment of Georgia Tech's program."⁸² The Board of Regents confirmed Van Leer's recommendation at their April meeting, thereby reversing their own previous position by keeping Southern Tech operating even if doing so had a negative impact on Georgia Tech.⁸³ Subsequently, the lease with the Navy was renewed, and the programs which were "in the works" continued to be developed.⁸⁴ Henceforth, both schools' budgets, though separate, would continue to be submitted as one request, which still gave Georgia Tech substantial authority over the Southern Tech budget. However, once allocations were approved by the Regents, the budgets were

⁷⁹U.S. Office of Education, Bulletin Number 4. Interestingly, these items in support of Southern Tech were the very ones cited by the Regents to Van Leer in their 21 March meeting concerning the future of Southern Tech.

⁸⁰Van Leer to Spalding, 27 March 1951; Spalding to Van Leer 28 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸¹Rowland Harris to L. V. Johnson, 28 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI. The Technician, "Covering the Campus," April 1951. STA.

⁸²Van Leer to Caldwell, 9 April 1951; Van Leer to Lynch, 6 April 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸³Minutes of the Board of Regents Meeting, 11 April 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸⁴Van Leer to Greer, 7 April 1951; Van Leer to Greer, 17 April 1951; Greer to Van Leer, 19 April 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

completely separate, and in principle Georgia Tech could not utilize funds directed for Southern Tech. This was a major step toward establishing Southern Tech within the family of institutions over which the University System exercised authority and ultimately placed Southern Tech in a much stronger relationship with the Board of Regents.⁸⁵

The uncertainties created by the funding controversies took a toll on students, faculty, and staff during the spring quarter of 1951, even though the decision to remain open was made at the very beginning of the quarter. No evidence indicates that anyone at the Chamblee campus understood what was going on between Van Leer and the Regents. Morale sank as one-third of the faculty resigned, some of whom had helped to make the school nationally known in only two years of operation. Even those who remained expressed some hesitancy about doing so.⁸⁶ On the other hand, with the school's selection to offer contract training for U.S. Air Force personnel (a project begun just before the budget controversy), Southern Tech's program became recognized as vital to the national defense, winning further support from the Regents.⁸⁷ By the following year, Regents' concerns about the school no longer focused on its role in the University System or its funding but on the size of its enrollment and the activities in which it was engaged.⁸⁸

For the Southern Tech campus, the awarding of the Air Force contract came at an auspicious time, just following a major controversy, and served as the beginning of a sustained period of contract training which would involve military and industrial clients. The Air Force training program, beginning in April 1951, was in Armament Electronics Fundamentals.⁸⁹ It concluded in October of the same year but was quickly followed by another contract with a different branch of the Air Force.⁹⁰ With the Korean War still on going, Southern Tech was clearly contributing to the national defense effort. Lockheed Corporation, in Marietta, also became interested in Southern

⁸⁵Harris to L. V. Johnson, 28 March 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸⁶Annual Report, 14 June 1951; L. V. Johnson to Caldwell, 5 July 1951. STA.

⁸⁷Sims to L. V. Johnson, 11 June 1951. STA. AC, 4 March 1953.

⁸⁸Ellis to L. V. Johnson, 4 March 1952. STA.

⁸⁹Telegram: Scott AFB to Van Leer, 12 April 1951. GTA, PF, TI. The first course began 23 April 1951.

⁹⁰Col. A. M. Minton to Van Leer, 15 October 1951; Maj. A. B. Swift to Georgia Tech, 24 October 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

Tech as a source for contract training. John D. Sewell, who had been L. V. Johnson's assistant at Southern Tech since before the school opened, took a leave of absence to become Director of Training at Lockheed.⁹¹ In his request for leave of absence, Sewell indicated he expected to direct some of Lockheed's training to the Southern Tech campus. Subsequently, a 19-week course in Electronics Fundamentals, to begin in September 1951, was developed by Southern Tech for fifty Lockheed employees.⁹² The results were excellent and led to an extension of the contract. In January 1952, L. V. Johnson reported a score 50% higher on the placement exam for those who had attended Southern Tech's course when compared to those trained in-house by Lockheed.⁹³ These and subsequent courses helped Southern Tech counter an enrollment decline during the 1951-52 academic year and provided an important new measure of visibility and prestige at a time when these were especially needed.

The next seven years, 1952-58, were marked by steady growth for Southern Tech, in enrollment, service to industry, and maturity as a technical institute. Greater visibility and acceptance by industry combined with the end of the Korean War and subsequent veterans' education benefits to boost enrollment from 401 in 1951-52 to 1195 during 1957-58.⁹⁴ Courses for industry during this time included electronics and radio courses for Southern Bell, American Telephone and Telegraph Company, Ohio Bell Telephone, Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone; a machine shop for Lockheed; and short courses for the Liquid Petroleum (LP) gas industry.⁹⁵ In March 1952, the school produced a short film, "The Technician in Industry" in an effort to better

⁹¹Sewell to L. V. Johnson, 7 March 1951. GTA, Emerson Papers.

⁹²Sewell to L. V. Johnson, 1 May 1951; Van Leer to L. V. Johnson, 11 May 1951; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 15 May 1951. GTA, PF, TI. Contract between Southern Technical Institute and Lockheed, 27 September 1951. STA.

⁹³L. V. Johnson, 13 December 1951. GTA, Emerson Papers. L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 31 January 1952. GTA, PF, TI. The scores were 95.5 for students at Southern Tech, 80 for graduate electrical engineers nationwide, and 64 for those trained in-house by Lockheed. Unfortunately, cutbacks after the end of the Korean War brought the program's termination.

⁹⁴Annual Report, 10 June 1952; Annual Report, July 1958. STA.

⁹⁵Annual Report, 20 June 1953; Annual Report, 15 June 1954; Annual Report, 19 July 1955; Annual Report, 21 June 1956; Annual Report, 7 June 1957; Annual Report, 22 July 1958. STA.

explain the role of Southern Tech and to define the technician's place in industry.⁹⁶ In subsequent years, several adjustments were made in the school's overall program. Entrance requirements were gradually tightened: entering students were required to be graduates of an accredited high school with at least one year of algebra (1956); use of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) was added (1957); and a course in plane geometry became necessary for admission (1958).⁹⁷ To meet the requirements of prospective students lacking this background, appropriate remedial courses were added to the program.⁹⁸ In October 1952, the LP Gas Fuel program had become so successful that it was made into a separate department, and a scholarship program for LP Gas students was expanded.⁹⁹ On January 15, 1953, the honor society for technical students, *Tau Alpha Pi*, became a national honor society.¹⁰⁰ During the 1955-56 academic year, a management option was added to the Industrial Technology curriculum.¹⁰¹ The following year the Civil Technology Department created a co-operative education (co-op) program with the Georgia State Highway Department.¹⁰²

⁹⁶Annual Report, 10 June 1952. STA. L. V. Johnson to Caldwell, 17 March 1952. GTA, Emerson Papers. AJ, 17 February 1952; AC, 4 March 1953. The film was shown to the Board of Regents with favorable reactions in April 1952.

⁹⁷Annual Report, 21 June 1956; Annual Report, 7 June 1957; Annual Report, 22 July 1958. STA.

⁹⁸Annual Report, 22 July 1958. STA. Courses in Math, Physics, and English were offered.

⁹⁹Annual Report, 20, June 1958. STA. L. V. Johnson to Anthony, 23 July 1952. GTA, Emerson Papers. (LPGA) Newsletter, May 1952; (LPGA) Newsletter, June 1952. This was changed to a loan program in 1954. Who and What, October 1954.

¹⁰⁰Annual Report, 15 June 1954. STA. Van Leer to L. V. Johnson, 10 March 1953. GTA, PF, TI. AJ, 9 July 1953. North Dekalb Record and Norcross News, July 1953. The organization was established by Professor Jesse J. DeFore, head of the Physics Department. By 1953, it required a student member to be in the top 4% of the class. It also published a quarterly magazine, Tau Alpha Pi Journal. The society became a national one when three additional chapters were established: at Flushing, New York; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Boston Massachusetts.

¹⁰¹Minutes, Board of Regents Meeting, 11 April 1956. GTA, PF, TI. Annual Report, 21 June 1956. STA. H. L. McClure, "Industrial Technology at Southern Tech," Technical Education News, xiv, no.2, December 1954. The article provides further background on the program and its evolution.

¹⁰²Annual Report, 7 June 1954. STA. L. V. Johnson to Weber (acting President of Georgia Tech), 12 April 1957; Weber to Caldwell, 26 April 1957. GTA, PF, TI. AJ, 15 May 1957. This was not the first co-op program, however. In late 1949, the first co-op program at Southern Tech was developed by the Mechanical Technology Department, begun in June 1950, and was supervised through the

In the 1957-58 academic year, a Textile Technology Department was finally established.¹⁰³ This same year, both electronics programs were combined into a single department offering three options.¹⁰⁴

Beyond its academic program, Southern Tech was also gradually maturing into an institution of higher education which included many other activities typical on a college campus: an organized athletic program, various clubs, an honor society, a newspaper, a yearbook, dormitory life, a co-op program, a placement service, and an alumni organization. H. S. Lockhart was hired as Director of Student Activities in September 1956. His duties included directing the school's sports activities as well as overseeing dormitory life as Assistant to the Dean of Students.¹⁰⁵ A Placement Office had been opened on campus within the first 18 months after the school was established. Following several personnel changes, this office became a separate unit from Georgia Tech's Office of Placement.¹⁰⁶ Southern Tech was the first non-engineering school accepted into membership in the Institute of Radio Engineers. The Society for the Advancement of Management was formed to appreciate the principles of management derived from industry. And the "Tech-Annes" formed a wives' organization, whose efforts in fund-raising and social activities developed a "user-friendly" atmosphere on campus.¹⁰⁷ In October 1954, Southern Tech was voted into membership in the American Society for Engineering Education. Graduates throughout this period had the happy choice of ten to 25 job offers with starting

Georgia Tech Co-op Division. Van Leer to L. V. Johnson, 25 October 1949. GTA, Emerson Papers. Annual Report, 21 April 1950. STA.

¹⁰³ Annual Report, 7 June 1957; Annual Report, 22 July 1958. STA. AC, 3 July 1957. At this time, the textile industry was Georgia's largest, with more than one billion dollars in goods produced annually. Southern Tech was the first institution to offer a degree in Textile Technology, which came only after ten years of advocacy and prodding of Regents by the industry. The program was offered in coordination with the A. French School of Textile Engineering at Georgia Tech. Also see: Northside News, 30 July 1953.

¹⁰⁴ Annual Report, 22 July 1958. STA.

¹⁰⁵ Annual Report, 7 June 1957. STA.

¹⁰⁶ L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 30 November 1949. GTA, PF, TI. Annual Report, 21 April 1950. STA. Initially it was set up in May 1949, by two Southern Tech professors, V. J. Baran and R. L. Wilkinson with the assistance of Georgia Tech. In September, Baran had left the school and Wilkinson was replaced by E. N. Crawford as Director of Placement.

¹⁰⁷ AC, 1 June 1952; AJ, 1 February 1954; AJ, 14 August 1954; AC, 13 October 1954.

salaries nearly the same as graduates of full four-year engineering schools.¹⁰⁸

Perhaps one of the most important events of the Chamblee period occurred in 1952. When established, Southern Tech had been authorized to award only certificates of study. However, in 1950, a growing movement to offer a degree in a technical specialty, similar to what a junior college offered, had developed nationally.¹⁰⁹ Officials at Southern Tech began urging the Georgia System to do the same for their students. In June 1952, the Technical Institute Division of the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) adopted a resolution calling for the awarding of an Associate degree to graduates of programs such as those offered by Southern Tech. They also resolved that such graduates should henceforth be referred to as "Engineering Technicians."¹¹⁰ In early July, L. V. Johnson formally requested that Southern Tech graduates be awarded the Associate in Science degree and be designated Engineering Technicians.¹¹¹ Van Leer marshalled the support of industry to further strengthen the request.¹¹² At their September meeting, the Regents approved this request.¹¹³ This event was a turning point in the life of the school as well as for its graduates, because it accorded academic recognition to the school in its own right and thus made it appropriate that the University System should exercise oversight for the school and its programs. It also significantly elevated the prestige accorded Southern Tech graduates among the companies for which they worked.

Two related actions followed the decision for Southern Tech to award an academic degree rather than a certificate. In November 1952, the Board of Regents

¹⁰⁸North Dekalb Record and Norcross News, 18 December 1952; AJC, 26 April 1953; The Georgia Engineer, xi, no.8, October 1953; AC, 10 December 1953; Augusta Courier, 30 April 1954, p. 4; AC, 23 June 1954; AC, 9 May 1955; AJ, 15 June 1955.

¹⁰⁹The Technician, November 1950. STA.

¹¹⁰Resolution of the Technical Institute Division, A.S.E.E., 26 June 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹¹L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 1 July 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹²C. S. Dudley to Van Leer; 17 July 1952; Van Leer to Dudley, 21 July 1952; Van Leer to Caldwell, 21 July 1952; Dudley to Van Leer, 23 July 1952; Caldwell to Van Leer, 25 July 1952; Dudley to Van Leer, 6 August 1952; Van Leer to Dudley, 7 August 1952. GTA, PF, TI. Van Leer would have acted on this himself, but Chancellor Caldwell felt the Regents might be interested and the matter was deferred to their jurisdiction.

¹¹³Caldwell to Van Leer, 25 July 1952; H. K. Stanford to Van Leer, 11 September 1952. GTA, PF, TI. AJ, 29 September 1952. With this authorization, Southern Tech became the only school in the Southeast to offer an AS in a technical institute program.

approved the awarding of the Associate in Science degree retroactively to all Southern Tech graduates who cared to apply.¹¹⁴ The justification for this action was that the program which previous graduates had completed was virtually identical with that of current graduates. The second decision concerned those students enrolled in the technical institute program of the Evening School at Georgia Tech. Since both Southern Tech and this program were under the Engineering Extension Division, and transfer of credit had been freely permitted between the two programs, Director Howell sought approval from Van Leer to award the same Associate of Science degree to Evening School graduates.¹¹⁵ Howell's proposal included the implication that technical institute program graduations could occur jointly with Georgia Tech's awarding of Bachelor, Master, and Ph. D. degrees.¹¹⁶ However, L. W. Chapin, Dean of the Faculties of Georgia Tech, expressed reservations about this proposal and insisted that it would be "very important [sic] that the ceremonies make clear that these are graduates of Southern Tech and not [sic] Georgia Tech."¹¹⁷ In fact, such joint commencements with Georgia Tech were never actually held. However, joint commencements of the Evening School technical institute program with Southern Tech did begin to be held. By summer, 1956, the two programs were beginning to be integrated into one as all technical institute-type training carried on by Georgia Tech, including conferring of degrees, was placed under the authority of the Southern Tech administration.¹¹⁸ Associate in Science degrees were first actually awarded in June 1953 for current students. At the alumni banquet on May 2, 1953, the first retroactive awards were made.¹¹⁹ By June 1953, more than half of all Southern Tech graduates had applied for the degree.¹²⁰

With the new degree and an enrollment making Southern Tech the fourth

¹¹⁴Stanford to Van Leer, 14 November 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹⁵Howell to Van Leer, 3 December 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹⁶Resolution, 26 June 1952. GTA, PF, TI. Though the AS was not a terminal degree, Chapin saw Southern Tech's program as a terminal degree program, no matter the designation, and therefore expressed his objections to any joint activities which could confuse the two schools.

¹¹⁷L. W. Chapin to Van Leer, 21 July 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹⁸Annual Report of the Engineering Extension Division, 25 July 1956. STA.

¹¹⁹AC, 8 April 1953.

¹²⁰Annual Report, 20 June, 1953. STA.

largest unit in the University System, attention began to focus on the qualifications of the faculty.¹²¹ Southern Tech's student population was becoming more established and the program more academically-oriented, suggesting the increasing possibility of academic transfers between college programs. Though Southern Tech was accredited by the ECPD and under the umbrella of Georgia Tech's accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (SACSS), there were questions concerning the extent to which Southern Tech did indeed meet the SACSS accreditation standards. When Van Leer pursued this issue with SACSS personnel, he was informed that Southern Tech should not be separately accredited but remain under Georgia Tech's accreditation.¹²² The SACSS position notwithstanding, there still remained questions about the extent to which Southern Tech faculty met SACSS criteria for accreditation, an issue which the Chancellor raised with Van Leer.¹²³ Van Leer rejected the applicability of standards for junior and senior college faculty.¹²⁴ Based on an assessment by L. V. Johnson, Van Leer suggested that because of the nature of technical institute training, experience should carry as much or more importance than a Master's degree. Caldwell accepted this position, although with a concern that both Georgia Tech and Southern Tech should also consider SACSS standards in personnel actions.¹²⁵

An interesting sequel to this issue arose five years later in discussions over transfer credit awarded for courses taken at Southern Tech. At the time, registrars used a handbook to rate various institutions' programs for such considerations. This rating was handled via the University of Georgia for Southern Tech, and a "D" rating

¹²¹AC, 29 September 1954.

¹²²J. M. Goddard to Van Leer, 1 September 1953. GTA, Emerson Papers. The SACSS position was that it accredited entire schools, not parts thereof. By 1965, the situation would be different, and Southern Tech would be separately accredited as a special purpose institution.

¹²³Caldwell to Van Leer, 16 June 1954. GTA, PF, TI.

¹²⁴Van Leer to Caldwell, 16 August 1954. GTA, PF, TI.

¹²⁵Caldwell to Van Leer, 24 August 1954. GTA, PF, TI. However, in Spring 1957, statutes for Southern Tech, similar to those for Georgia Tech, were under development. By February 1958, the guidelines were ready: an MS plus 14 years' teaching experience, or Industrial experience plus an MS plus 4 years' teaching experience, or an MS plus PE license plus 10 years' teaching experience, or Industrial experience plus 4 years' teaching experience would be required for the rank of full professor. These were approved by the Regents at their March 1958 meeting. L. V. Johnson to Gordon Brown, 28 March 1957; L. V. Johnson to Harrison (President, Georgia Tech), 24 February 1958; Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 12 March 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

had been assigned. After a number of meetings concerning the issue, in which the curricula at Southern Tech were more fully presented to the registrar at the University of Georgia, he offered to upgrade the Southern Tech rating two levels, to a "B."¹²⁶ This change acknowledged the quality of the Southern Tech program and enabled students who wanted to complete a four-year degree after finishing their studies at Southern Tech a much greater opportunity for doing so. This recognition came as Southern Tech was about to enter a new era, with a new campus, in a new location. It capped a decade of growth and achievement for the school and its graduates and provided a growing recognition by government, industry, and academia of the value and importance of the training the school provided.¹²⁷ Opportune timing and industrial demand were contributing to the school's rapid development. As Southern Tech prepared to move from Chamblee across Atlanta to its present Marietta location, predictions were for a student body approaching 2000 within five to six years. Amid the slow process of building and increasingly cramped quarters at Chamblee, there was an optimism about what would yet be, which had long since replaced the tentativeness of those first days at the Chamblee campus.

¹²⁶W. N. Danner to L. Y. Bryant, 11 May 1954; L. V. Johnson to J. D. Blair, 11 May 1959. GTA, PF, TI.

¹²⁷E.g.: Final approval by the Veterans Administration for all courses and curricula at Southern Tech, which only came in 1953 (LP Gas, September 1953); achieving support of high school and vocational counselors (after a clinic held for them in February 1954, to familiarize them with technical institute training; Annual Report, 15 June 1954, STA).

Chapter 3

A Permanent Campus

One of the most dramatic events in the history of Southern Tech was when the school moved from Dekalb County to Cobb County. For ten years, Southern Tech had developed and grown within Dekalb County. There was a close knit intimate atmosphere on the campus, and in campus life.¹ The school's presence was estimated to have brought into the county a \$500,000 payroll; faculty, staff, and student residences with their related economic impact; and some industry that was attracted to the county because the school was there. But there were several institutions of higher education located solely in Dekalb County, some enjoying national prestige, such as Emory University, while Southern Tech was part of Georgia Tech. At the same time, Cobb County was becoming an industrial center through the Lockheed/Dobbins complex. Lockheed was, at the time, the single largest employer in the state of Georgia. Yet in the entire 14-county area of northwest Georgia, no state-financed institution of higher education existed. This situation stimulated some leaders of business, industry, and government in Cobb County to begin working for changes in the state educational role for the region. When their actions merged with political "horse-trading," it unleashed a chain of events affecting the effort to find a permanent campus for Southern Tech.

Assuming Southern Technical Institute survived politically and economically, the school would eventually need a permanent campus. The leased facilities of the Naval Air Station at Chamblee were only a temporary home, at best. If the Navy decided to abandon the facility, there would be strong competition for the site by numerous governmental and local agencies, of which Southern Tech (through its parent institution Georgia Tech) would be but one contender. With the eruption of the Korean War during the school's early years, no sudden military base closures were likely, nor was there much danger of such an action in the near future. However, as peace returned and the military began reassessing its needs, the Navy slated its Air Station facility in Atlanta for transfer to the Dobbins/ Lockheed complex in Marietta. This meant that the Chamblee facility, once vacated, would be returned to its original owners or declared surplus government property, a situation which presented potentially serious difficulties for Southern Tech.

The beginning of the search for a site for a permanent campus actually began hardly more than a year after Southern Tech had opened. The Navy barracks in which the school was housed had been built as temporary wooden structures and

¹Interview with E. J. Muller, 6 February 1995.

required significant capital expenditures for maintenance. While the school could remain in them and continue to use the buildings for many years, clearly it would eventually be necessary to have a more permanent home for the school, either at the Chamblee site or elsewhere. With this in mind, during 1949, Col. Van Leer began exploring with the Navy the possibilities of establishing a more permanent home for Southern Tech on the Naval Air Station site. Adjacent to the Air Station was a Veteran's Hospital, portions of which Georgia Tech was already leasing for housing veteran students and faculty. The Lawson hospital gymnasium was also leased to Southern Tech for its sports program. If the hospital were to be declared surplus by the government, it was natural that Georgia Tech would seek to acquire it. Thus, in July 1949, Van Leer alerted Gen. Carl Gray, Administrator of Veteran's Affairs, to Georgia Tech's interest in Lawson hospital, should it be declared surplus.² Gray's response was non-committal since the Veteran's Administration would turn such property over to the Government Services Administration for disposal. This shift of responsibility between government agencies could prejudice the final disposition of the property. Van Leer was assured, however, that Public Law (PL 142, passed June 30, 1949) would give educational institutions priority in such matters; but until the property was actually declared surplus, there was no action that anyone could take other than to open a channel of communication concerning any future disposition of the property.³

Van Leer's initiative seemingly paid off quickly, for Georgia Tech was not the only agency interested in acquiring the property. Less than six months after Van Leer's query, the clerk for the City of Chamblee requested through one of Georgia's Congressional representatives that the Lawson hospital property be given to the city when it became available.⁴ When Gen. Gray was contacted about this request, he seems to have received it without mentioning the prior interest expressed by Van Leer. Nor did he inform Van Leer of the interest expressed by the City of Chamblee.⁵ However, Gen. Gray did inform the City of Chamblee that it was unlikely that the

²Van Leer to Gen. Carl Gray, 7 July 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

³Gray to Van Leer, 21 July 1949; Van Leer to Gray, 2 August 1949. GTA, PF, TI. In principle, this active display of interest would establish a chronological priority of interest by Georgia Tech as well, and Van Leer sought to be sure he would be notified in the event of any future action by either the Veteran's Administration or the Government Services Administration regarding the property.

⁴Miller to (U.S. Rep.) Davis, 15 December 1949; Davis to Miller, 19 December 1949. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵Davis to Gray, 20 February 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

Lawson hospital would be declared surplus before Emory hospital was built, meaning any action on the matter would be considerably delayed.⁶ Nevertheless, the city was assured that at the proper time, every possible consideration would be given regarding its interest in a portion of the Lawson hospital property.⁷ However, within weeks an announcement appeared in a local paper asserting that government officials had assured the City of Chamblee, in a letter, that it could purchase a portion of the Lawson hospital when it was declared surplus.⁸ Immediately, L. V. Johnson informed these same officials of Georgia Tech's prior request for the property noting that, in fact, some of the area sought by the City of Chamblee infringed on areas already in use by Southern Tech.⁹ During the next month a flurry of correspondences erupted, involving Congressmen, the Veteran's Administration, the Associated Industries of Georgia, and officials at Southern Tech and Georgia Tech. In the end it was determined that acquisition of the Lawson property by anyone anytime soon was unlikely.¹⁰ The most that could be done, other than for the two parties to communicate and resolve the issue so that they could avoid competing claims later, was to make known, in detail, the specific areas each party desired.¹¹

Though interest in the Lawson hospital went nowhere at the time, it underscored the tentative, if not temporary character of Southern Tech's presence at Chamblee and the need to maintain a focus on acquisition of a site for a permanent campus as soon as possible.¹² The search intensified over the next several years as maintenance costs rose due to building deterioration (in 1955 the Navy demanded \$7,000 in immediate repairs). In addition, the physical location of the campus vis-a-

⁶Davis to Miller, 20 February 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷Dryden to Davis, 2 March 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸North Dekalb Record and Norcross News, 23 March 1950.

⁹L. V. Johnson to Davis, 29 March 1950; Davis to L. V. Johnson, 3 April 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁰Brewer to L. V. Johnson, 6 April 1950; Lambdin Kay to L. V. Johnson, 10 April 1950; Sen. George to L. V. Johnson, 11 April 1950; L. V. Johnson to Rep. Davis, 11 April 1950; Van Leer to Rep. Davis, 12 April 1950; Sen. Russell to Van Leer, 14 April 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹Van Leer to A. L. Harris, 10 July 1950. GTA, PF, TI.

¹²L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 29 March 1950. GTA, PF, TI. The concern seems to have been Van Leer's. L. V. Johnson is agreeing and underscoring. Also, the size of any prospective property is established at 100-200 acres at this time.

vis changing Atlanta demographics, the distance from Georgia Tech, and a growing student population which threatened to exhaust the available facilities all contributed to the intensification of the search.¹³ Numerous possibilities were considered. When in 1955, O'Keefe High School, across the street from the Georgia Tech campus, appeared to be available and when the Candler estate on Briarcliff Road seemed available, both possibilities were pursued by Georgia Tech, but without success.¹⁴ During this period, what was needed in a permanent campus also underwent refinement. Rather than the entire Lawson hospital area, Southern Tech officials suggested a site further in town would be preferable. However, the school wanted to retain the pool, tennis courts, chapel, and clubhouse at Lawson along with the barracks and officer's club near the gymnasium (which were already in use by Southern Tech).¹⁵ The physical size was also refined by Van Leer in a speech to Southern Tech alumni: a site of 30 to 40 acres, leading to a \$3,500,000 campus for 1500 students.¹⁶

Vigilance in searching for a new campus had not been misplaced. By 1955, the Navy set the tentative date to move the Naval Air Station to the Dobbins area for sometime in 1957.¹⁷ Since the Naval Air Station lease expired in 1955, there was some concern over whether the Navy would renew it, and there was an increasingly intense interest on the part of DeKalb County, especially in the airport facilities at the Naval Air Station.¹⁸ The whole issue of the Lawson property was moved to the fore again, along with the disposal of the Naval Air Station property. Again Georgia Tech and Southern Tech officials turned to both military and government leaders, who were

¹³Annual Report, 14 June 1951; Annual Report, 10 June 1952; Annual Report, 20 June 1953; Annual Report 19 July 1954. STA. Atlanta's population was increasing rapidly. Neighborhoods near the campus were changing their compositions, businesses were building new facilities in the county, and traffic congestion was increasing.

¹⁴Annual Report, 14 June 1951; Annual Report, 15 June 1954. STA. L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 28 July 1955; Van Leer to Caldwell, 23 August 1955. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁵L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 19 February 1953. GTA, Emerson Papers.

¹⁶L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 5 May 1953. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁷L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 25 August 1955. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁸L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 14 April 1955. GTA, PF, TI.

sympathetic to the schools' concerns but unable to assist substantively.¹⁹ Dekalb County was already planning to use and expand the airport at the Naval Air Station, to the detriment of the Southern Tech program.²⁰ When Southern Tech protested the county's plans to officials in Washington, they learned for the first time that a substantial portion of the Naval Air Station was actually owned by Dekalb County and only leased by the Navy.²¹ Government officials promised their assistance and support regarding those areas which were government-owned, but were powerless to influence Dekalb County regarding use of its own property. When Dekalb County officials were consulted, they offered little assistance since the county was committed to developing an airport in order to attract new industry into the area.²² To deal with the developing crisis, Van Leer subsequently established an advisory committee to consider Southern Tech's location.²³ The issue of location for Southern Tech was urgent but not immediate since the Naval Air Station was not planning to relocate for at least another year. For the moment it was agreed to prepare maps of the Naval Air Station showing exactly what portions were U. S. government property, and which ones Dekalb County owned.²⁴ As soon as the decision to declare the Naval Air Station property surplus was made, Georgia Tech intended to file an application for acquisition of the property on behalf of Southern Tech.²⁵ This, in fact, appears to

¹⁹Van Leer to Rep. J. C. Davis, 30 August 1955; L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 2 September 1955; Van Leer to J. H. S. Johnson, 30 August 1955; Van Leer to Hon. M. B. Folsom (Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare), 7 September 1955. GTA, PF, TI.

²⁰L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 25 August 1955. GTA, PF, TI.

²¹H. E. Harman (Regional Director, GSA) to Van Leer, 16 September 1955. GTA, PF, TI.

²²See, for example, "Resolution by Dekalb Chamber of Commerce," 3 March 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

²³Van Leer to Clifford Clark (Chair), D. J. Houghton, Jim Cherry, J. R. Anthony, R. S. Howell, L. V. Johnson, H. H. Callaway, 19 September 1955; Van Leer to Mrs. W. T. Healey, Sr., 6 October 1955. GTA, PF, TI. Callaway was a member of the Board of Regents and subsequently might have to approve the committee's actions and so declined to serve. Mrs. Healey was asked to serve instead. This committee represented a cross-section of industry and education leaders within the state at the time.

²⁴L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 27 August 1955; Van Leer to L. V. Johnson, 19 September 1955; M. N. Mavity to Van Leer, 22 September 1955; Van Leer to Harman, 26 September 1955. GTA, PF, TI.

²⁵Van Leer to Caldwell, 19 September 1955; Caldwell to Van Leer, 21 September 1955. GTA, PF, TI.

have been the sole option pursued during the next 18 months as the school leased additional facilities from the Navy to accommodate its growing student population.²⁶ The only contingency plan developed, if the Naval Air Station facility was denied to Southern Tech, seems to have been to create a network of technical institutes in Georgia under the aegis of Southern Tech.²⁷

Quite apart from the uncertainties surrounding Southern Tech's location, in mid-1957, momentum began to grow in Cobb County for a University System school to be established there. During the late 1950s, a movement to establish state-funded, state-controlled junior colleges was sweeping the country. In June 1957, then-Governor Marvin Griffin delivered an address to the Georgia Press Association Convention in which he urged the creation of a junior college system for the state of Georgia.²⁸ John King of Marietta, a private pilot and aide to the governor, was at the Press Association Convention. As a member of the Public and Business Affairs Committee for the Marietta Kiwanis Club, King urged the committee to work toward establishing the first of any such junior colleges in the Cobb County area.²⁹ For some years, an off-campus center of the University of Georgia had operated in Marietta but lacked a facility of its own and offered only evening classes. In October 1957, a delegation of city and county leaders assembled by the Kiwanis committee approached Governor Griffin to urge him to help provide a permanent facility for the Off-campus Center, with the intention that it would grow into a junior college.³⁰ Governor Griffin

²⁶Van Leer died unexpectedly in early 1956. The sudden change of leadership complicated the development of strategy for dealing with the issue of a permanent campus for Southern Tech even though the interim administration was sympathetic to the need.

²⁷W. F. Mosher to Rep. Davis, 7 January 1956; Weber to Caldwell, 4 September 1956; Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 19 September 1956. GTA, PF, TI. Annual Report, 21 June 1956, Annual Report, 7 June 1957. STA. Annual Report, Engineering Extension Division, 25 July 1956. GTA. The division into multiple technical institutes was not actually a new concept but had been suggested at various times and by various persons. See: L. V. Johnson to Dr. John Ivey, 11 December 1951; Harrison to Bryan, 8 May 1958. GTA, PF, TI. Also, AJ, 11 September 1955.

²⁸MDJ, 11 June 1958.

²⁹ibid. Mr. Bill Kinney, editor of the Marietta Daily Journal, was the chair of this committee. After the decision was finalized to move Southern Tech to Cobb County, he printed a detailed account of the process, from his perspective, in his newspaper: "Cobb Countians Who Refuse to Take 'No' Win Fight For State College." The committee members included Kinney, Carl Kotchian, Rep. Harold Willingham, Judge Jim Manning, Emmett Hobbs, Bill Hardy, Claud Hicks, and John Hill.

³⁰ibid.

supported the idea and appointed a committee to study it. If this committee approved, he promised to seek legislative funding. However, when the committee voted on the idea, only one vote in favor of the Cobb delegation's proposal was recorded.³¹ The Kiwanis committee decide to press the idea of a permanent facility for the Off-campus Center, and the Cobb delegation eventually secured a commitment from the Governor for \$600,000 from state surplus funds for the purpose of building a permanent facility. Nevertheless, the Board of Regents resisted the idea of administering the money in this fashion, preferring to find their own solution for the Off-campus Center issue while redirecting some or all of the \$600,000 for other purposes if such funds were made available.³²

Meanwhile, the situation for Southern Tech was becoming more tenuous. Not only had the Navy begun the process of moving early in 1958, but stiff competition also loomed for any part of either the Lawson property or the Naval Air Station property which might be declared surplus. And any decision on the final disbursement of these was not expected for three to five years.³³ Yet Southern Tech was continuing to grow and needed still more buildings for use as a campus. While Southern Tech and Georgia Tech pursued the possibilities of expansion with the Navy, in March 1958, a plan began to develop which could address both political interests and the need for a campus for Southern Tech.³⁴ The Regents contacted King and Willingham, proposing the use of the \$600,000 to relocate Southern Tech to Cobb County, a proposal which found quick support from the Kiwanis committee.³⁵ On March 20, 1958, in a speech to the Marietta Kiwanis Club, Governor Griffin then pledged \$600,000 toward a possible move of Southern Tech to Cobb County, to

³¹Ibid. During the previous decade enormous changes had occurred in the State University System. As part of the attempt to eliminate duplication, some colleges in the state had been reduced to junior colleges. Others became co-ed for the first time. In addition, the funding basis was changed from geographic to population-based. See Fincher, Cameron. Historical Development of the University System of Georgia: 1932-1990. (Athens: University of Georgia Institute of Higher Education, 1991). The committee included legislators from Augusta, Athens, Savannah, Carrollton, Statesboro, and Columbus. Each had a state college in his/her area and, in spite of an offer of donated property, resisted the idea of a junior college in Cobb County which could further affect funding allocations for schools in that member's area.

³²Ibid.

³³L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 19 February 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁴Harrison to Caldwell, 3 March 1958. GTA, PF, TI; MDJ, 4 June 1958.

³⁵MDJ, 4 June 1958; Siebert to Reed, 26 March 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

which would be added an offer of land for the campus; however, the money could not be released until the Regents studied the idea.³⁶ This proposal was made in lieu of providing a specific facility for the Off-campus Center. Within days Georgia Tech, Southern Tech, and the Regents had begun to study possible sites and funding requirements.³⁷

Dekalb County was caught off-guard, to some extent, by all the movement toward Cobb County. Despite Dekalb County's unwillingness to accommodate Southern Tech's interests and needs at the Naval Air Station, the county acknowledged the school's need for a permanent campus. In early March, as Southern Tech prepared to celebrate its tenth anniversary, the Dekalb Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution commending the school and pledging its help in acquiring a permanent campus.³⁸ However, when the news broke that a move to Cobb County was being contemplated for Southern Tech, it appeared already to be a fait accompli - only the location had yet to be determined it seemed, and Dekalb appeared to support the proposed move.³⁹ However, a change of attitude swiftly ensued on the part of Dekalb officials, who approached the Chancellor about the situation. He referred the county officials to President Harrison at Georgia Tech.⁴⁰ The result was a fierce, though brief, competition for Southern Tech. As Cobb County assembled a proposal package which included land and utility services, Dekalb presented a special report focusing on reasons for Southern Tech's continued presence in Dekalb County.⁴¹ The struggle intensified after Willingham and Cobb officials persuaded the Governor to raise to \$2,000,000 the amount he would commit from state funds for the

³⁶North Dekalb Record and Norcross News, 20 March 1958.

³⁷Harrison to J. W. Mason (Chair), L. V. Johnson, J. H. Dewberry, 28 March 1958. This was the Georgia Tech committee. The Regents also formed a committee.

³⁸Resolution, 3 March 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

³⁹Northside News, 27 March 1958. The reasons cited are both the airport and the easier commute for professors, who, the article explains, also teach at Georgia Tech (which was not generally the case)!

⁴⁰North Dekalb Record and Norcross News, 3 April 1958; AJ, 2 April 1958.

⁴¹J. Anderson to Harrison, 29 April 1958; McCollum to Board of Regents, 6 May 1958. GTA, PF, TI; The Marietta Daily Journal asserted that Dekalb's lackluster effort was because they already had several institutions of higher education - e.g., Emory and Agnes Scott - and Southern Tech never got the full recognition it deserved from the county because it was considered a branch of Georgia Tech (thus from another county) and its program appeared to officials of the county to be more vocational in character. MDJ, 4 October 1961.

move.⁴²

When the Regents deferred a decision on the move at their May meeting, Cobb legislators met with Governor Griffin for breakfast, during which time they pledged to support his rural roads bill in exchange for his pledge to make disbursement of the \$2,000,000 contingent upon a move of Southern Tech to Cobb County.⁴³ Having agreed to this, the Governor then signaled to the Regents that they might expect no funds for a Continuing Education Center near Athens, nor for a nuclear reactor at Georgia Tech (both "pet projects" of the Athens and Atlanta areas' Regents) unless they decide to move Southern Tech to Cobb County.⁴⁴ The Regents quickly saw the wisdom in moving Southern Tech to Cobb County.

Despite the hectic activity on the part of both Dekalb and Cobb counties in May 1958, there was probably little chance that Southern Tech would have remained in Dekalb County. Though the school had been good for the county, Dekalb had other, more visible institutions and very much wanted to develop the Naval Air Station property for a regional airport. The very best offer presented by Dekalb included eight possible locations, each of approximately 100 acres, any one of which the county would sell to the State University System for a discounted price.⁴⁵ Cobb had already offered a similar amount of land free and had added utilities and other services, along with arrangements for student housing through the Marietta Housing Authority and a recreation facility through a park located near the site of the proposed

⁴²MDJ, 11 June 1958. However, the Regents considered this amount only sufficient for classrooms and laboratories, not dorms and other facilities.

⁴³MDJ, 8 May 1958. For over a decade highway construction to pave, expand, and develop new roads all over Georgia resulted in big business and big politics. Governor Griffin was facing reelection in 1958 and the Rural Roads bill would have possibly helped a shrinking but politically powerful rural population. The bill eventually failed. An article which appeared in the Dekalb New Era, 18 January 1962, asserts that Cobb support for this bill (and Dekalb's opposition to it) was related to the Southern Tech relocation issue, and that suggestions for sites came from the Governor's office. It stirred quite a controversy, and Harrison considered it necessary to deny any such connection - though it is certain that Governor Griffin clearly favored Cobb County as the place for relocation of the school. That there was such a connection as alleged in the article is borne out by a comment made to Hoyt McClure by Griffin years later, that the Cobb votes for his bill were "the most costly of his (Governor Griffin's) administration." Harrison to Hon. G. W. Rutland, 26 January 1962. GTA, PF, TI; Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995.

⁴⁴MDJ, 22 August 1958. These projects were regarded a top priorities by the state's two flagship institutions, the University of Georgia at Athens and Georgia Tech in Atlanta.

⁴⁵Broome to Mason, 13 May 1958; Special Report on Southern Technical Institute Relocation, 4 June 1958. GTA, PF, TI. AJ, 14 May 1958; Dekalb New Era, 15 May 1958; AJ, 10 June 1958.

campus.⁴⁶ Essentially, the issue of relocation came down to where in Cobb the school would be moved, not whether it would remain in Dekalb or move to Cobb County. That this situation was obvious to Dekalb officials is suggested by their decision a week before the formal vote on relocation that agreed to permit Southern Tech to remain at the Naval Air Station facility during the transition until the school could successfully relocate.⁴⁷ At the Regents' meeting on June 11, 1958, the formal decision was made that Southern Tech should relocate to the site in Cobb County on which it is currently situated.⁴⁸ The final package provided for a new campus for Southern Tech, whose buildings would be made available evenings for the use of the Off-campus Center; additionally, preliminary plans included provision for a joint Southern Tech-Public Library to be constructed on the campus.

The decision to move the campus was the beginning of a protracted relocation process. Southern Tech would remain at the Naval Air Station facility in Chamblee for three and a half more years as construction began to drag out. During this time, the school had to maintain a good relationship with both Dekalb and Naval officials. To this end, Director L. V. Johnson immediately expressed his appreciation for Dekalb's efforts in trying to keep the school in the county and indicated the decision was not rooted in Dekalb's attitude toward the school but in more practical considerations.⁴⁹ In fact, the majority of Southern Tech's faculty and staff were established in Dekalb County and less than anxious to uproot their families and sever local ties.⁵⁰ However, the decision also meant stability and opportunity for the school beyond what it had known during its first decade.

For administrators at Georgia Tech and for numerous officials at Southern Tech, planning for the relocation of the school to Cobb County consumed considerable time and effort. As in any building program, there were contracts to be let and detailed planning for the physical plant, followed by funding considerations

⁴⁶Willingham to Harrison, 15 May 1958; Harrison to Willingham, 22 May 1958; Caldwell to Harrison, 22 May 1958; McCollum to Harrison, 28 May 1958; Harrison to Caldwell, 5 June 1958. GTA, PF, TI; Northside News, 22 May 1958; MDJ, 11 June 1958. Prominent local businessman, S. Walter Kelley, was the hidden intermediary between city and county officials in working out the complicated arrangements for the land swap which enabled Cobb officials to put this proposal together.

⁴⁷Anderson to Harrison, 4 June 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

⁴⁸Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 11 June 1958.

⁴⁹L. V. Johnson to Anderson, 12 June 1958; Broome to Harrison, 11 July 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁰Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995. STA.

and constant refinements in detail and cost. The Governor had previously sequestered \$2,000,000 of the state's surplus funds to be used for the new campus. These funds were now released for the project and invested at interest.⁵¹ The firm of Tapp and Savini was engaged to do the preliminary architectural work and ultimately would see the plan through to completion.⁵² To work with them, Georgia Tech's president, E. D. Harrison, set up a committee of five persons chaired by Mr. C. A. Petty.⁵³ The composition of this committee reflects one of the significant changes which began to develop in the Georgia Tech-Southern Tech relationship. Prior to the planning for the new campus, issues related to physical facilities had largely been a matter between the officials at Southern Tech and those of the Naval Air Station. Georgia Tech officials only provided the official sanction for whatever was decided and at times intervened either officially to request facilities or to ensure that matters of maintenance were funded and accomplished. Otherwise, Georgia Tech's Physical Plant Department's involvement on the Southern Tech campus was limited to such things as preparing the theater for graduation; all substantive matters were handled separately from Georgia Tech's departments.⁵⁴ However, with the new Marietta campus, Georgia Tech's Physical Plant Department was involved virtually from the start and would remain responsible for the physical operation of the school until July 1, 1980, when Southern Tech was officially separated from Georgia Tech.⁵⁵

The building process proceeded slowly. Groundbreaking for the new campus was combined with an Appreciation Day in honor of Governor Griffin on December 17, 1958.⁵⁶ In February 1959, preliminary plans were approved and contracts signed

⁵¹Harrison to Governor Griffin, 5 August 1958. GTA, PF, TI; Cobb County Times, 7 August 1958. The Regents were also informed that the \$2,000,000 was a maximum, and they were responsible to ensure that the project finished within budget.

⁵²Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 9 July 1958; Dewberry to Tapp and Savini, 11 July 1958; Dewberry to Harrison, 11 July 1958; Tapp to Harrison, 15 July 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵³Harrison to C. A. Petty (Chair), L. V. Johnson, P. M. Hefferman, J. R. Anthony, R. S. Howell, 14 July 1958. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁴See, for example, L. V. Johnson to Emerson, 24 August 1952. GTA, Emerson Papers.

⁵⁵Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995. STA.

⁵⁶MDJ, 16 December 1958. The festivities included a banquet attended by over 1000 persons at the Larry Bell Center in Marietta. Groundbreaking ceremonies took place at 4:30 p.m., with speeches by Griffin, Harrison, L. V. Johnson, Archie Rushton (Director of the Off-campus Center), O. C. Aderhold (President, University of Georgia), and Rep. Willingham, who served as Master of

with the Marietta Board of Water and Lights, the City of Marietta, and Cobb County - all of which were necessary for site preparation prior to construction.⁵⁷ Construction was actually delayed a year, due in part to a controversy which arose in 1959, during which there was talk of closing down the entire State University System of Georgia.⁵⁸ This resulted in a delay in all funding activity until the issue was resolved. In January 1960, the Board of Regents authorized their Director of Plant and Business Operations, Mr. J. H. Dewberry, to handle the project - from letting bids and contract execution to general oversight for the project - in consultation with Georgia Tech and Southern Tech officials.⁵⁹ The winning bid was submitted by the Coite Somers Company of Vidalia, Georgia, at \$1,797,000.⁶⁰

Final contract execution was delayed briefly by a short-lived controversy which threatened to cause the entire project to unravel. In late March a private development firm sought approval from the City of Marietta to construct a housing project for African-Americans on property adjacent to the new campus. President Harrison and officials from Southern Tech expressed their strong objections to the proposed project, threatening to refuse to co-sign the construction contract for the new campus for Southern Tech. The Cobb County Grand Jury issued a Special Presentment, and various other business owners and officials also expressed their

Ceremonies.

⁵⁷Dewberry to Harrison, 13 February 1959; Dewberry to Harrison, 17 February 1959; Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 22 April 1959; Contracts executed 12 May 1959. GTA, PF, TI.

⁵⁸By this time the integration/segregation issue had begun affecting the arena of public education. Since the 1954 Supreme Court ruling outlawing separate but equal educational facilities, the state of Georgia had been working to derail desegregation in the state schools. Specifically, laws were passed, providing state assistance to citizens who chose to send their children to private schools. Then, in 1959, with the Georgia State College in Atlanta under a court order to desegregate, the state legislature authorized the Governor to close any state public schools if conditions resulting from student transfer were likely to result in or cause violence or public disorder in that community. There was a companion bill which authorized closure within the University System under similar circumstances. The bill thus provided for pre-emptive closure of state institutions to prevent successful enforcement of desegregation orders. See Joiner, A History of Public Education in Georgia.

⁵⁹Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 13 January 1960. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶⁰Dewberry to Coite Somers Company, 4 March 1960; Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 16 March 1960. GTA, PF, TI.

disapproval of the proposed housing development.⁶¹ Within days the issue reached such scandalous proportions that the developers withdrew the request and the matter died. Subsequently, officials of the City of Marietta passed a resolution which strongly expressed support for Southern Tech and promised in the future they would consult with officials at the school before considering such issues.⁶²

With the controversy over the housing project settled, the contract for construction was signed, almost two years after the decision to relocate Southern Tech to Cobb County had first been considered.⁶³ On April 4, 1960, a second groundbreaking ceremony was held for the project.⁶⁴ Almost immediately there were construction delays, mostly as a result of disputes between the contractor and school officials. Twice during the ensuing 18 months, the contractor found it necessary to replace his site supervisor for cause.⁶⁵ Added to these problems, a protracted dispute arose with Atlanta Gas Light Company over gas service to the school, which had not been included in the 1958 City/County services package proposed for the relocation effort.⁶⁶ Weather delays during the winters and union problems combined with these other factors to put the construction substantially behind schedule. In January 1961,

⁶¹MDJ, 22 March 1960; Harrison to the Mayor of Marietta and City Council, 23 March 1960. GTA, PF, TI. The basic issue was possible disruption of campus life by residents of the proposed housing complex.

⁶²Memorandum by L. V. Johnson, 25 March 1960; Resolution by the City of Marietta, 25 March 1960. GTA, PF, TI. Actually, the area was outside the city limits and technically required no approval from the City of Marietta. However, the housing project would have to use city utilities and thus required prior approval for the project.

⁶³Harrison to Willingham, 25 March 1960; Harrison to Hon. Sam Welch, 25 March 1960; Harrison to Charlie Manner, 25 March 1960; Harrison to Willingham, 30 March 1960. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶⁴MDJ, 4 April 1960.

⁶⁵Tapp to Dewberry, 16 May 1960; Tapp to Dewberry, 25 May 1960. GTA, PF, TI. These problems related to differences over the nature of the reinforcing steel to be used. Tapp to Dewberry, 27 July 1960; Dewberry to Tapp, 28 July 1960; Tapp to Dewberry, 9 August 1960; Tapp to Dewberry, 13 August 1960; Tapp to Dewberry, 24 August 1960; Tapp to Dewberry, 10 February 1961; Tapp to Dewberry, 3 March 1961; Tapp to Dewberry, 6 April 1961; Tapp to Dewberry, 20 April 1961; Tapp to Dewberry, 8 May 1961; Tapp to Dewberry, 16 May 1961; Tapp to Coite Somers, 17 May 1961; Tapp to Dewberry, 19 May 1961; Tapp to Dewberry, 25 May 1961. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶⁶Tapp to Petty, 19 July 1959; Dewberry to Harrison, 25 January 1960; S. E. Van Diver Attorney General's Opinion, 17 September 1960; Harrison to Dewberry, 14 April 1961; Harrison to Dewberry, 11 September 1961. GTA, PF, TI.

it was apparent the school's relocation would be necessary by sometime in September; in late Spring, however, it was also certain that the project would miss its target completion date of June 30, 1961.⁶⁷ During a visit to the construction site in May 1961, Hoyt McClure, Acting Director of Southern Tech since 1959, found only six workers at a site which included eight buildings. In an effort to force a response from the contractor and since the September date was not widely known, McClure began notifying various agencies to start planning for a late June move.⁶⁸ Word of this action quickly reached Harrison, and when McClure explained what he encountered at the job site a meeting was hurriedly scheduled with the contractor in order to address the problem.⁶⁹ It was agreed that each unit would be accepted with exceptions as it became available, and the contractor would make the necessary corrections even while the units were occupied by the school.⁷⁰ The move was then scheduled for the period between the end of the summer quarter and the beginning of fall quarter 1961, the academic schedule having already been adjusted to permit time for the move to take place.⁷¹

On the Southern Tech campus in Chamblee, the decision for relocation to Cobb County stirred a new sense of excitement and enthusiasm. The events surrounding the decision had provided the school with a public relations bonanza, and planning for the physical move became the first preoccupation, after academics, at the school.⁷² Architect's drawings had to be prepared; and departments, offices, and classrooms had to be identified on the drawings. Every piece of furniture was examined and tagged, either for disposal or to be placed into a queue for refinishing and identification of the building and room to which it was destined at the new

⁶⁷McClure to Harrison, 23 January 1961. GTA, PF, TI. Concern about this potential problem was expressed as early as September 1960. Petty to Anthony, 29 September 1960. GTA, PF, TI. Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995. STA.

⁶⁸Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995. STA. L. V. Johnson had replaced R. S. Howell as Director of the Engineering Extension Division when the latter retired on 1 July 1959. As of that date, McClure became the acting Director of Southern Tech.

⁶⁹Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995. STA. Harrison to Dewberry, 22 May 1961; Dewberry to Harrison, 23 May 1961. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷⁰Tapp to Coite Somers, 12 June 1961. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷¹McClure to Harrison, 23 January 1961. GTA, PF, TI. The move actually began on 5 September and required three weeks to complete. Fall quarter classes began on 2 October 1961.

⁷²Annual Report, 22 July 1958; Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995. STA.

campus. Generally, students were less directly affected than the faculty and the administration by the relocation effort since Southern Tech was still a two-year school at the time, and the earliest projected date for completion of the new campus had been Spring 1960, meaning that students entering the program as late as September 1958 could expect to graduate while the school was still located in Chamblee. Nevertheless, there was more activity than usual on the Chamblee campus: visitors circulating models and drawings of the new campus and special events, all of which involved the students in the relocation as well.⁷³

The new campus consisted of eight buildings initially, though at first move-in, only two were completed. The remainder were finished during the fall quarter, and over the ensuing 18 months, the landscaping, which had been delayed due to funding considerations, was also completed.⁷⁴ It was out of this period that "The Rock" entered Southern Tech tradition, one of many which would develop on the new campus. As most casual visitors to campus discover, there is a prominent limestone protrusion in the center of campus. During the clearing and grading process, this piece of bedrock was discovered protruding from its surrounding terrain. Professor Chester R. Orvold of the Building Construction Technology Department (now the School of Architecture) saw this protrusion as more than an impediment to progress. He undertook a successful campaign to "save the Rock" (since it did not actually interfere with any planned construction) which subsequently became a campus gathering place.⁷⁵ Any organization on campus had the authority to "capture The Rock" and retain control thereof as long as someone from that organization remained physically in contact with "The Rock."⁷⁶ This site has been the scene of contests between such student organizations as fraternities and sororities; it has been spray painted innumerable times; and it has served as the podium for addressing large or small gatherings of the campus community.

As "The Rock" suggests, life on the new campus was different, if not better, than at Chamblee, but the adjustment was sometimes difficult. Fiscal austerity had led to the accumulation of a lot of material which faculty felt might be needed for repairing equipment, and a lot of junk as well. Though it was intended that such

⁷³Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995. STA.

⁷⁴Tapp to Daugherty, 11 June 1959; Tapp to Dewberry, 15 May 1961. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷⁵Interview with E. G. Muller, 6 February 1995. STA.

⁷⁶Several incidents in the 1980s led to some significant changes in these rules, and The Rock is today not the scene of as much competition, though it remains a gathering place for campus organizations occasionally.

"junk" be discarded rather than moved to the new campus, many faculty members sought to hold on to such items and secretly moved them to the new campus. It took two years before Director McClure succeeded in discovering and disposing of these items.⁷⁷ The overall atmosphere on the new campus was upbeat, however. Faculty had new offices, classrooms, laboratories, and shops; and for the first time significant funds were available to them for furnishing and upgrading their shops and laboratories. Likewise, continuing students who had attended Southern Tech at the Chamblee campus were delighted with the new facilities. This attitude led to greater enthusiasm for their studies and a deepened sense of pride in the school. New students responded differently. Not only were there things they disliked on the campus, but the housing situation was especially disappointing.

Housing was provided in residences originally built to house employees at the Bell Bomber plant (now the Lockheed Martin facility) and were by this time being managed by the Marietta Housing Authority as low-income residences. The "Roach Palace," as some students were wont to refer to the facilities, was in poor condition, and some students who had enrolled and come to the school for registration were known to have left even before the first day of class.⁷⁸ Housing, in fact, caused considerable concern almost from the final decision to relocate the school. During the period of campus construction, the Marietta Housing Authority was already reluctant to fulfill the offer included as part of the successful bid by Cobb officials for the relocation of Southern Tech to Cobb County and urged the school to find a different solution to its housing need. This brought the issue of dormitories into focus.⁷⁹

In February 1959, only a few weeks after ground-breaking, the Marietta Housing Authority approached State Representative Harold Willingham about the possibility of building new dormitories on the campus, which the Housing Authority would manage for the school using student rental fees to repay the investment. In response, Willingham crafted a bill which was passed during that state legislative session authorizing any municipal housing authority in the state to build and manage dormitories for State University System schools.⁸⁰ At this point it looked as if

⁷⁷Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995. STA. This, for example, ranged from odd pieces of pipe to wire and discarded pieces of sheet metal.

⁷⁸Interview with Hoyt McClure. 24 August 1995. STA. The problems got even worse when the Marietta Housing Authority determined to bulldoze the site for other uses. L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 25 January 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷⁹L. V. Johnson to Tapp, 27 February 1959. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸⁰MDJ, 4 February 1959.

Southern Tech would have its own dorms without using the existing Marietta Housing Authority facilities near the campus. But the previously mentioned threat of closure of the University System during 1959 meant that had such dormitories been built and the school subsequently have been closed by the legislature, the Marietta Housing Authority would have had to bear a substantial financial burden. The Authority remained interested in building the dormitories for Southern Tech, not the least reason of which was that under the contractual terms related to the relocation of the school they might have to turn out or move some current residents of the housing facility. However, they wanted assurance the Board of Regents would guarantee repayment of the capital expenditure for the dormitories.⁸¹ When this was not forthcoming, the possibility of new dormitories for the campus evaporated for the time, and the construction of the new campus, by then underway, became the central focus for all concerned.

In late 1960, the U.S. Congress began making funds available for new housing construction on the nation's campuses. This led to a brief revival of interest in obtaining dormitories for the new campus.⁸² A meeting between Harrison, Dewberry, and Willingham in October raised numerous issues but provided no resolution concerning the dormitories other than to continue to try to convince the Marietta Housing Authority that it could afford to underwrite the cost of construction for the dormitories.⁸³ If these officials were unsuccessful in the Marietta Housing Authority effort, the only immediate course of action would be to wait and see what housing might be available when the new campus would be occupied. While this may have been the only option available at the moment, it was not a good solution to the problem of housing for Southern Tech. While the Marietta Housing Authority agreed it would fulfill its pledge to provide housing, it was pointed out that some current residents would indeed have to move or leave Housing Authority homes in order to make room for the students, creating "sure-to-occur ill-will" toward Southern Tech and the Regents.⁸⁴ Once again the Authority urged reconsideration of the dormitory

⁸¹McClure to Harrison, 14 March 1960. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸²L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 4 October 1960; Harrison to Dewberry, 6 October 1960. GTA, PF, TI. Johnson notes that if such funds were made available by Congress, Southern Tech would receive first priority for a housing loan. He urged immediate application for a \$1,200,000 loan to build the needed dormitories.

⁸³Harrison to Willingham, 14 October 1960; Harrison to Willingham, 21 October 1960; Harrison to Dewberry, 21 October 1960. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸⁴S. W. Kelley to R. O. Arnold, 17 January 1961. GTA, PF, TI.

funding issue. This was to no avail and Southern Tech continued to expect to use the Marietta Housing Authority facilities at "Marietta Place" for student housing, as the Housing Authority had pledged in 1958.⁸⁵

Southern Tech and Georgia Tech officials continued searching for a way to obtain new dormitories for the campus, however, not knowing how short a time actually existed before it would be necessary to have them.⁸⁶ By late 1962, the situation had become critical. Not only were some of the buildings at Marietta Place uninhabitable, but structural problems would necessitate that some be razed the following summer. Leases on many units were to terminate in March, and the Marietta Housing Authority was intending to remove all structures and lease the land by June 1965.⁸⁷ This decision to eliminate the housing units caught Harrison by surprise, since in its original offer, the Marietta Housing Authority had indicated no time limit for use of the facilities.⁸⁸ Despite his protests, the Marietta Housing Authority remained firm in its decision.⁸⁹ Added to this concern was the negative impact housing was having on student enrollment; approximately 75 students intending to register for fall quarter 1962 had left without registering after seeing the housing facilities.⁹⁰ With no help forthcoming from Marietta Housing Authority officials and with a Board of Regents unwilling to fund any new dormitories for Southern Tech, officials turned to the one channel which had often been their primary recourse.

During the 1963 legislative session, led by the Cobb delegation and through lobbying efforts on behalf of the school from various quarters, the legislature developed a means for funding the needed dormitories by using a federal loan.⁹¹ Immediately, officials from the school began the application process with the Housing

⁸⁵Harrison to H. E. Williams, 13 June 1961. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸⁶Harrison to Anthony, 10 November 1961. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸⁷L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 25 January 1963; Commissioners of the Marietta Housing Authority to Harrison, 29 April 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸⁸Harrison to Colquitt, 6 May 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸⁹L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 8 August 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

⁹⁰L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 25 January 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

⁹¹Petty to Anthony, 7 January 1963; Harrison to L. V. Johnson, 24 January 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

and Home Finance Agency as architects' plans were drafted for the dormitory.⁹² Emphasis was placed on the need for two dormitories since the Marietta Housing Authority was already housing twice the number of students the first dormitory could accommodate.⁹³ In April, the Board of Regents approved the preliminary plans for a single dormitory which would include a lounge and recreation area, dining area, small clinic, and an apartment for the dormitory manager, at a budget of \$749,981.⁹⁴ Even though the final plans were prepared by mid-June, further action was delayed until September 1963 because a preliminary ruling had indicated Southern Tech was ineligible to receive funds from the Housing and Home Finance Agency, which required that the request be reconsidered.⁹⁵ By mid-September the project was approved and funded so that construction began soon after the beginning of 1964.⁹⁶ Meanwhile, efforts toward obtaining approval for a second dormitory continued, winning the support of the General Assembly and Governor Sanders for inclusion in the \$71,000,000 Master Plan for Education bond program.⁹⁷ In July the contract was let for the second dormitory. The timing was such that completion of these two projects came just as the Marietta Housing Authority facilities became unavailable: the 1965-66 academic year.⁹⁸ These two dormitories enabled Southern Tech to offer housing for approximately 500 students.⁹⁹

As with the dormitories, the school had gained in physical facilities and

⁹²Harrison to Caldwell, 8 February 1963; Dewberry to Sims, 13 February 1963; Harrison to Caldwell, 22 February 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

⁹³Harrison to Caldwell, 8 February 1963; L. V. Johnson, 16 October 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

⁹⁴Dewberry to Harrison, 10 April 1963. GTA, PF, TI. The firm of Bothwell and Nash did the architects' plans for the project.

⁹⁵MDJ, 16 September 1963.

⁹⁶L. V. Johnson to Sims, 18 September 1963. GTA, PF, TI. The T. C. Brittain Company won the contract. T. C. Brittain Proposal, 19 November 1963; Telegram: Sims to T. C. Brittain Company, 5 December 1963; Sims to T. C. Brittain Company, 10 December 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

⁹⁷MDJ, 11 March 1964.

⁹⁸Harrison to Sims, 22 March 1965. GTA, PF, TI; MDJ, 9 August 1964.

⁹⁹At the time, approximately 400 students were housed at Marietta Place. The new dorms provided a 25% increase in housing space. In the 1980s, private apartments would also be built just off campus to house students. These are presently called the Campus Walk apartments.

academic resources by relocating. But it lost control of virtually all auxiliary services; the bookstore, dining hall, recreation facilities, and even the library (such as it had existed at Chamblee) were either non-existent or housed in tenuous and very temporary quarters. The new dormitories would help relieve some of the need for living spaces, but a library building and a student auditorium or recreational facility were still sorely needed. With two dormitories under construction, Southern Tech's administration began to focus on these other pressing needs. The visit of the ECPD accrediting committee in the Spring of 1963 had noted the need for a library facility. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accrediting committee, which would soon be considering a request for accreditation by the school, was expected to be even more emphatic about the need for a library in order for it to accredit Southern Tech independently from Georgia Tech.¹⁰⁰

Fortunately for Southern Tech, in late 1963, federal legislation was approved which offered grants of up to 40% of the construction costs for certain facilities on the nation's campuses. Among the possible projects to be funded under this legislation were libraries, recreational facilities, and purchases of laboratory equipment.¹⁰¹ As soon as the Regents were able to act on a request for such projects under this program, requests by Southern Tech officials were submitted and quickly approved.¹⁰² Work began almost immediately on a recreational building/auditorium which was completed in 1966.¹⁰³ However, federal matching funds for the library were to become available only during the 1965-66 federal fiscal year.¹⁰⁴ Hence, when groundbreaking for the new library was held on April 12, 1966, over two years had elapsed since the project's approval, and carpenter strikes would cause further delays, so that the building would not be occupied for almost two more years.¹⁰⁵ The delays in library construction, in some sense, typified the continued frustration of Southern

¹⁰⁰Annual Report, 12 June 1963; Annual Report, 22 June 1964. STA. Smyrna Herald, 16 May 1963.

¹⁰¹L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 19 December 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁰²MDJ, 11 March 1964. The remainder was funded through the Master Plan for Education bond program mentioned above. The approval process moved with unusual haste.

¹⁰³Annual Report, 22 June 1964. STA; MDJ, 26 January 1969.

¹⁰⁴Annual Report, 30 June 1965. STA.

¹⁰⁵Annual Report, 1 July 1966; Annual Report, 24 June 1968. STA; MDJ, 11 May 1966; MDJ, 21 August 1966.

Tech administrators over such facilities since the school opened in 1948. Initially, the library was created from books professors possessed on their office shelves; in fact, many of these books were actually checked out directly from faculty offices.¹⁰⁶ The librarian was the wife of Professor E. G. Muller, and the bookstore checked out books from its common book resource when the book was not in a faculty member's office.¹⁰⁷ In order to increase library holdings, books of any sort were gathered; those not useful for the Southern Tech library were sold and the funds used to purchase additional volumes.¹⁰⁸ The first time the library received a line item in the school's budget was in conjunction with the move to Cobb County. Only in 1963 did a trained librarian begin working with the school when Georgia Tech assigned one of their librarians to help with Southern Tech's library.¹⁰⁹ The library began as a bookshelf against a wall, before eventually enjoying a room of its own, which housed the school's collection. Eventually, temporary quarters were created on the new campus until the completion of a permanent library facility in 1968.¹¹⁰

In 1965, in anticipation of a new library, a Southern Tech Development Fund was established. Southern Tech graduate L. Glenn Dewberry ('49) was named its national chairman.¹¹¹ The specific goal of the organization was to raise \$50,000 during its first year for the purchase of books for the new library. However, the goals of the organization were not limited just to the purchase of books. Interest-free loans to needy and/or worthy students were also established, and the organization accepted contributions to help meet whatever was deemed the most significant needs of the school at the time. Through this organization, substantial progress was made toward enhancing the library collection at Southern Tech. A second significant step in the process was made with the full-time employment of Mr. John Patillo as the school's

¹⁰⁶Interview with E. G. Muller, 6 February 1995. STA.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸Interview with H. L. McClure, 24 August 1995. STA.

¹⁰⁹Annual Report, 12 June 1963. STA.

¹¹⁰One of the ideas which was part of the move to Cobb County had been the construction on the campus of a library facility to which both Southern Tech and the public would share access. Nothing ever developed from this, however.

¹¹¹Dewberry was president of Atlantic Steel Company, had served as Lt. Governor, and was on the Vocational and Technical Education Advisory Board for the Atlanta Public School System. He was also prominent in the Associated Industries of Georgia.

librarian in January 1967.¹¹² He was a trained librarian and pursued many avenues to obtain gifts and funding through grants, by which thousands of dollars were received toward book purchases.

By the time all of this additional new construction on the campus was complete, Southern Tech had a gymnasium/recreation facility which would support college intervarsity sports, and which could double as an auditorium capable of seating the school's entire enrollment plus faculty, for a total of over 1500 persons. It had a full-service library adequate to meet the ECPD and SACS accreditation standards. Of increasing necessity, but still some years into the future, were two additional projects: a building specifically for use by the physical plant department, and a student center/services building.

During this period, efforts were also made to increase the physical dimensions of the campus. In 1959, some were predicting that by 1970, the student body would number 5000. That this did not happen in 1970, nor even 25 years after that, is the result of a complex combination of circumstances; but in 1960, the prediction seemed realistic. Even during the construction of the new campus, some small property acquisitions were being made to fill in peripheral areas of the campus. Concern over dormitory housing and location had opened up the possibility of acquiring some land which was at the time still part of Dobbins Air Force Base. Discussions with the base commander had indicated that there was some property adjacent to that of Southern Tech for which the base had no planned use. It was suggested that the Marietta Housing Authority might be able to obtain that land for the purpose of constructing new dormitories for the school.¹¹³ Subsequently, forty acres were identified for this purpose, and requests began passing between Georgia Tech, the Air Force, and politicians in Washington, D. C.¹¹⁴ Ultimately, the Air Force indicated it might use the land for its own future construction purposes, and this initiative ended abruptly. However, Southern Tech had established a serious interest

¹¹²Annual Report, 1 July 1967. STA.

¹¹³L. V. Johnson to Col. W. M. Bower, 25 February 1959; Bower to L. V. Johnson, 4 March 1959. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹⁴L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 5 April 1959; Harrison to Bower, 13 April 1959; Sen. H. Talmadge to Harrison, 15 April 1959; Sen. R. Russell to Harrison, 17 April 1959; Rep. Erwin Mitchell to Harrison, 20 April 1959; Bower to Harrison, 24 April 1959; Harrison to Bower, 29 April 1959; Maj. W. P. Fisher to Talmadge, 30 April 1959; Talmadge to Harrison, 4 May 1959 (also, similar letters from Russell and Mitchell to Harrison). GTA, PF, TI.

in obtaining portions of the Dobbins land if ever it were to be declared surplus.¹¹⁵

In January 1965, the serious possibility arose for some Dobbins land to be declared surplus, including land in which Southern Tech had already expressed interest. L. V. Johnson urged President Harrison to again seek consideration, while documenting the school's earlier interest in the land.¹¹⁶ Though no one at the time realized it, that very year Southern Tech reached an enrollment plateau which would last for several years. However, at the time, Southern Tech officials were still optimistic that the school would continue the growth it had been enjoying for some years, fueling anticipation that the campus might soon need to expand beyond its initial property. School officials quickly submitted their requests for the Dobbins property and began marshalling political assistance toward this end as well.¹¹⁷ The desired land was a 68-acre parcel adjoining the campus, and while initially it appeared likely that Southern Tech would obtain the land uncontested, by mid-year so many other agencies had requested parts of the base property that the Air Force ordered a general reappraisal.¹¹⁸ Ultimately, Southern Tech got the desired parcel, in 1974, after a hotly contested effort involving the Cobb County School Board, the Cobb County Department of Parks and Recreation, the City of Marietta Department of Parks and Recreation, and Southern Tech.¹¹⁹ The final division of a total 106 acres was made between the Cobb County School Board (41 acres) and Southern Tech (65 acres).¹²⁰

¹¹⁵Fisher to Talmadge, 6 July 1959; Talmadge to Harrison, 7 July 1959 (similar letters from Russell and Mitchell). GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹⁶L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 19 January 1965. STA. Though McClure was the school's Director, L. V. Johnson, as head of the Engineering Extension Division, was McClure's superior. Dobbins officials had apparently told Johnson that he needed to get support for the request as soon as possible.

¹¹⁷Harrison to Gen. Wilson, 22 January 1965; Harrison to L. V. Johnson, 22 January 1965; Harrison to Rep. C. L. Weltner, 9 February 1965; Harrison to L. V. Johnson, 12 February 1965. GTA, PF, TI. Another reason offered by Johnson for the need to expand the school's physical property was if it became a four-year school (a movement which at the time was in its embryonic stage). Harrison felt any such reason was premature at the time and so deleted it from official requests.

¹¹⁸Weltner to Air Force Congressional Liaison Office, 15 February 1965; McClure to Rep. J. W. Davis, 22 February 1965; Air Force to Weltner, 4 March 1965; Weltner to Harrison, 5 March 1965; McClure to General Services Administration, 16 March 1965; McClure to Surplus Property Division, H.E.W., 16 March 1965; Air Force to Davis, 30 July 1965. GTA, PF, TI.

¹¹⁹MDJ, 14 June 1974; AC, 17 June 1974; AC, 19 June 1974; MDJ, 24 July 1974.

¹²⁰AJ, 3 May 1975.

The decade of the 1960s was a turbulent era for the United States, though student life on the Southern Tech campus was relatively tame, even apathetic at times.¹²¹ The student body remained mostly male and had continued to grow through 1965. Admission of African-American students produced virtually no confrontation, in spite of the fears on the part of the administration to the contrary.¹²² Only toward the end of the decade, as campus unrest spread across the nation, did any incidents occur and these were limited: unrest in the dormitories, adolescent pranks, discontent with the dining hall, small-time thievery, and hotrodding around campus.¹²³ However, students also declared their support for the U.S. policy in Vietnam and primarily focused on their studies.¹²⁴ Under the leadership of Director McClure, the school seemed to prosper. The faculty and administration enjoyed a generally supportive atmosphere in which the primary activity was teaching and the faculty received the support needed to carry out that responsibility. During this period, some academic changes were introduced as the school attempted to remain a leader in science and technology education. The growing movement to create vocational-technical(vo-tech) schools, in particular, led to changes in the Southern Tech curriculum, terminology, and course titles in order to differentiate and emphasize the unique program of Southern Tech.¹²⁵ By the official dedication of the new campus on May 6, 1962, calculus had been added as a requirement in all programs except Textile Engineering Technology. To further distinguish Southern Tech from the vo-techs, the name of the degree offered at Southern Tech was changed from Associate in Science to Associate in Engineering Technology.¹²⁶ For entering students lacking the background needed for some of their courses, non-credit remedial courses were developed in algebra, geometry, composition, and reading.

¹²¹Annual Report, 30 June 1969. STA.

¹²²McClure to L. V. Johnson, 5 August 1964; L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 6 August 1964; Harrison to L. V. Johnson, 7 August 1964. GTA, PF, TI. Annual Report, 30 June 1965. STA.

¹²³Annual Report, 24 June 1968. STA.

¹²⁴MDJ, 23 January 1966.

¹²⁵Annual Report, 2 June 1961. STA.

¹²⁶Annual Report, 5 June 1962. STA. Except for the degree awarded by the Building Construction Department, though within two years, the Building Construction degree became Architectural Engineering Technology. Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 11 March 1964; Annual Report, 23 June 1964. STA.

In 1963, a self-study steering committee headed by Professor Harry V. Smith began working toward full accreditation by SACS as a "special purpose" institution.¹²⁷ When the SACS inspection took place in April 1964, preliminary results were devastating: laboratory equipment shortages and library facilities were among the more immediate concerns.¹²⁸ However, the school was determined not to miss this opportunity and resolved to make whatever academic, and even personnel changes might be necessary to be successful.¹²⁹ To some of the concerns, the school offered a rebuttal based on its unique mission. In other areas (e.g., equipment, library) evidence was presented to SACS of changes or planned improvements.¹³⁰ These efforts were successful, and by the end of the year Southern Tech had become only one of two technical institutes in the South enjoying SACS accreditation; and the only one with both SACS and ECPD accreditation in the South.¹³¹ To strengthen the student body academically, math and English achievement tests, administered through the Princeton-based College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB), became admission requirements beginning with the 1964-65 academic year.¹³² That same year, the Evening School technical institute courses at Georgia Tech were formally united with the day school program under the aegis of Southern Tech.¹³³ In 1966, with the help of Rich's Department Stores, Southern Tech entered the computer age through a temporary arrangement which allowed the school access to Rich's Computing Center's equipment.¹³⁴ Subsequently, Southern Tech was chosen by the U. S. Department of

¹²⁷Annual Report, 12 June 1963. STA.

¹²⁸Annual Report, 23 June 1964; Southern Tech Intercom, undated. STA.

¹²⁹L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 1 June 1964. GTA, PF, TI. The purpose of the preliminary report was to allow the school to make such changes as were necessary, in order to receive a favorable vote.

¹³⁰L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 19 September 1964. GTA, PF, TI.

¹³¹Sweet to McClure, 9 December 1964; Sweet to Harrison, 9 December 1964. GTA, PF, TI; Annual Report, 30 June 1965. STA.

¹³²Annual Report, 22 June 1964. STA.

¹³³Annual Report, 22 June 1964. STA. Until this time, these had been separate units of the Engineering Extension Division. This integration was actually the beginning of a process which brought the Engineering Extension Division to an end when Southern Tech became a four-year school in 1970.

¹³⁴Annual Report, 1 July 1966. STA.

Health, Education, and Welfare (H.E.W.) to receive an IBM 1401 computer for use in developing a curriculum in computer technology.¹³⁵ This new program became the computer option in the Electrical Engineering Technology department.

In 1968, the Gas-Fuel program came to an end. For nearly two decades it served as a source of student enrollments, as a backbone of the curriculum, and as a symbol of the school's uniqueness; but technological changes and industrial needs were such that only a very few majors continued to enroll in the department. Since it was no longer feasible to continue to offer the program, it was terminated, and the department was merged into the Mechanical Engineering Technology Department.¹³⁶ In this same year, the annual Bathtub Race began. It soon enjoyed nationwide prominence, provided considerable publicity for the school, and drew many sections of the school together.¹³⁷ According to campus legend, in 1966 a fraternity seeking to chill a quantity of beer for a party found a discarded bathtub to which wheels were added, and it was filled with ice. When a second fraternity chanced to see the rolling tub, a challenge was issued for a race. A date was set, and the race took place with something of a festive atmosphere. This activity then quickly grew into a campus-wide event.¹³⁸

Throughout the 1960s, attempts had been made to familiarize the local community and the state with Southern Tech's program. There had been open house events, high school counselor conferences, and visitation days, but none of these generated the excitement of the Bathtub Race. It was quickly united with visitation day for prospective students, and many departments and clubs developed presentations to promote the school and their own activities to the thousands who soon began to come to the campus for the race every year. The first two years, the race was human powered and relatively tame. By the third year (1968), motorized engines were used, and the race started gaining local and even national attention, eventually being featured on Cable News Network broadcasts (in the 1980s), and was borrowed by Ted Turner to stir interest in the Braves baseball games by featuring such races as pre-game entertainment. A serious accident which resulted in a fatality in 1972 almost

¹³⁵Annual Report, 1 July 1967. STA. Southern Tech was one of six chosen. Unfortunately, use was restricted on this computer so that it was not available to the entire school, even though every department believed it had a use for the computer. MDJ, 24 August 1966.

¹³⁶Annual Report, 24 June 1968. STA.

¹³⁷Annual Report, 24 June 1968. STA.

¹³⁸Interview with H. L. McClure, 24 August 1995. STA; MDJ, 17 May 1972.

brought the annual race to an end.¹³⁹ After this event, stringent safety features were developed, and the annual races continued until 1991. During much of the 1980s, in fact, two races a year were staged.

The decade of the 1960s was a time for maturation at Southern Tech. With the move to Cobb County, the school finally "became a part" of the State University System as it grew into a strong institution respected by industry leaders nationwide. This maturation took co-operation and teamwork, which more than anything else characterizes this period of the school's history. However, for the school and the nation, there were challenges in technology, in education, and in society itself which were arising as well. It was the age of the Vietnam War, of protest movements, of political assassinations. These things imposed numerous concerns and issues with which the school would have to deal if it was to survive.

¹³⁹MDJ, 2 June 1972. The young woman was struck by a bathtub, which caused a compound fracture of her leg. Five days later, a blood clot from the injured site broke free and lodged in her lungs, causing her death. Mrs. Stephen Flood's survivors brought a suit against the school, but there were questions which existed over where she actually was when the accident occurred, and the school was not held liable by the court for her death.



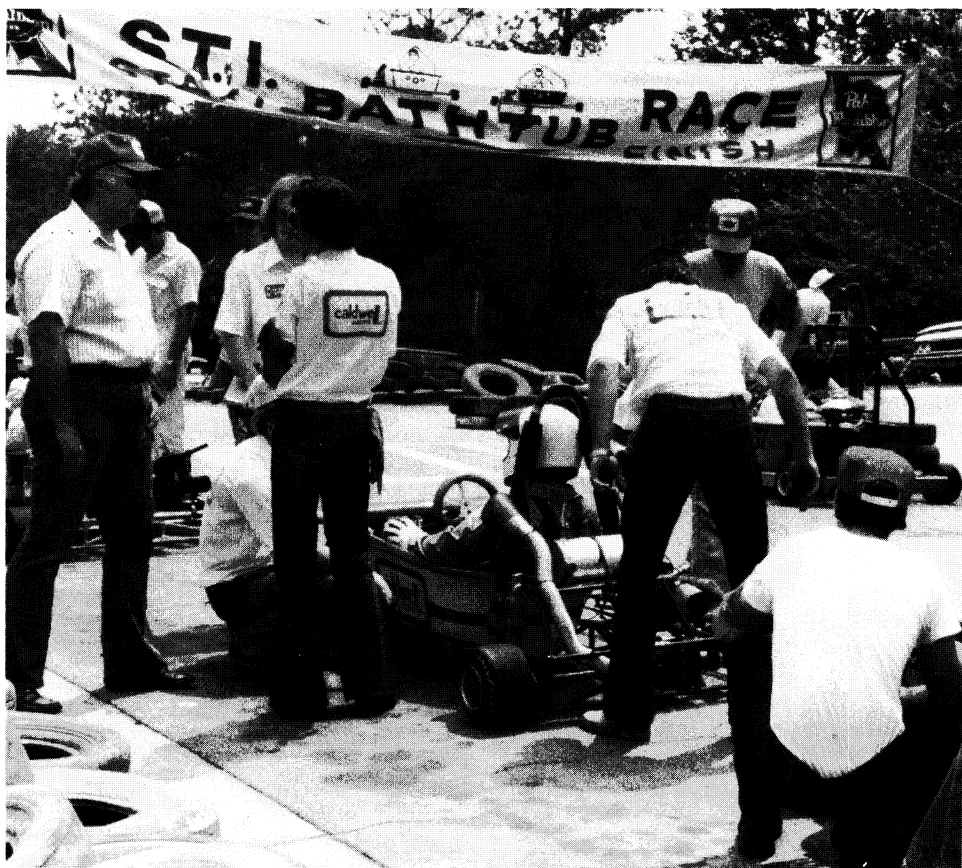
Professor David Summers oversees ECET students during a laboratory exercise.



"The Rock": a natural piece of exposed limestone at the center of campus. The Rock has served as a gathering point and podium for the campus. The scene of fraternity and sorority competitions over the years, special rules govern its capturing and retention.



Professor Robert Hays in the dunk-a-thon booth during Goat Week. Goat Week sought to provide opportunities for social interaction between students faculty and staff during the 1970s and early 1980s. It is now largely celebrated only by the fraternities and sororities on campus.



"Gentlemen, start your engines." The annual Bathtub Race is about to get underway. Bathtub racing was a tradition on the campus from 1966 until 1991.

Chapter Four

Competition and Transition: Surviving the 1960s and 1970s

Traditionally, Georgia Tech had provided Georgia with both applications- and research-oriented engineers, offering both undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, during the Van Leer presidency, Georgia Tech intentionally began a redirection toward emphasizing research and graduate level work, which intensified during the late 1950s and early 1960s.¹ At the same time, Southern Technical Institute was established under the auspices of Georgia Tech in order to provide the state with the technicians so desperately sought by industry. Almost from the beginning, however, there was competition from other state institutions to meet industry's needs. In 1951, while Southern Tech was struggling for respect from the Board of Regents, for students and adequate financing, the Georgia Teachers College in Statesboro announced the initiation of an Industrial Technician program.² Georgia Tech had not previously been consulted about this action, and at Southern Tech there was concern over possible duplication of its efforts.³ The matter was settled amicably when the program was determined to be sufficiently distinct and regionally isolated from that of Southern Tech.

A more serious challenge arose the following year. In February 1951, at the request of the president of Georgia Southwestern College, the Board of Regents approved a joint venture between the college and a local vocational school. It was understood by the Board to be a program of the vocational school, to which Georgia Southwestern College would contribute a few courses in English, history, and cultural subjects; and the diploma would be awarded by the vocational school.⁴ In late 1952, during a visit to Southern Tech's Placement Office, a representative of Georgia Southwestern College spoke of the program his school was establishing in Americus

¹Cheshier to J. E. Arnet, 11 April 1984. STA.

²Van Leer to Caldwell, 5 June 1951. GTA, PF, TI.

³Duplication of programs was one of the major issues which had led to a reorganization of the State University System during the 1930s and 1940s. It remained a concern for the Regents in 1951 as well.

⁴Callaway to Van Leer, 9 December 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

in cooperation with the vocational school.⁵ However, his school's literature referred to the state as now having "two institutions which offer the full two-year curricula for industrial technicians."⁶ Georgia Tech immediately challenged the Americus program since the original resolution passed by the Regents clearly stated that "the present offerings of Georgia Southwestern College will not be expanded and no new course added."⁷ Upon investigation, changes were required in the Georgia Southwestern program to ensure that the Regent's policy was maintained.⁸ This action preserved Southern Tech's position as the only institution of the State University System which offered a true technical institute education.

Some years later, as Southern Tech was preparing to move to Cobb County, a new challenge to Southern Tech arose: the vocational-technical institute (vo-tech). As part of a nationwide movement, the Georgia State Board of Education embarked on a program to establish vo-techs around the state.⁹ Previously, any competition to Southern Tech had fallen under the same state agency, but this time another state agency was involved over which the Regents had no direct control, nor any influence. The vo-techs offered a level of education below that of Southern Tech, but especially those in the Atlanta area quickly sought to develop a technical institute level of education, using the same terminology, the same course titles, even the same books as those used at Southern Tech.¹⁰ To make the situation even more difficult for

⁵L. V. Johnson to Van Leer, 20 November 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

⁶H. K. Stanford to Van Leer, 19 March 1953. GTA, PF, TI.

⁷Caldwell to Van Leer, 16 January 1953. GTA, PF, TI.

⁸Emerson to Van Leer, 24 November 1952; Van Leer to Caldwell, 25 November 1952; Caldwell to Van Leer, 9 December 1952; L. A. Moll to H. K. Stanford, 12 December 1952; L. V. Johnson to Stanford, 24 December 1952; Stanford to Van Leer, 19 March 1953. GTA, PF, TI. Specifically, Georgia Southwestern was instructed to terminate distribution of the page asserting two industrial technician programs existed in the state, change their catalog to emphasize the award of a general junior college diploma, provide no transfer credit for technical subjects, and not use the term "technician" as relating to any of their graduates.

⁹Annual Report, 2 June 1961. STA. The junior college movement was also developing at this time and, in fact, was related to Southern Tech's move to Cobb County (see previous chapter), but at the time was not considered a challenge to Southern Tech in that each focused on different student populations.

¹⁰Annual Report, 5 June 1962; Annual Report, 12 June 1963. STA. L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 8 February 1962; Harrison to Caldwell, 20 February 1962. GTA, PF, TI.

Southern Tech, it was suggested that Cobb's vo-tech, as well as the planned new junior college, either be located on sites adjacent to or even on the campus of Southern Tech.¹¹ This action would seriously restrict the room available for Southern Tech to expand and further blur the distinction between Southern Tech and these other programs, especially that of the vo-techs, while not enhancing educational opportunities for any of their students significantly. Though the idea was ultimately rejected, it was evident that some clearly significant, differentiating characteristics were needed if Southern Tech was to retain its own unique identity.¹²

During the 1960s several steps were taken to distinguish Southern Tech from the vo-techs. Calculus was made a required course for all but one major and the school changed the name of the degree being awarded to Associate of Engineering Technology. A program of campus visitation for high school counselors was initiated by Southern Tech's full time counselor, William Glenn.¹³ This program brought counselors from around the state to the Southern Tech campus to see first hand what a true technical institute education was and to have explained the difference between Southern Tech and the vo-techs. An understanding of technical institute education was especially important both because the counselors would be better able to advise their students and because the vo-tech education was offered at little or no cost to the student.¹⁴

At the same time, the relationship between Southern Tech and the Marietta Off-Campus Center of the University of Georgia was becoming increasingly difficult. The Off-Campus Center used the Southern Tech campus during the evenings since evening classes in the technical institute program were still being held on the Georgia Tech campus.¹⁵ However, during the early 1960s, a reorganization of the Engineering Extension Division's Evening School transferred all "credit" classes to the authority of the appropriate day school - which for Southern Tech meant that by 1964, all technical institute classes were offered at the Marietta campus, whether day or

¹¹Harrison to Caldwell, 4 December 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

¹²Caldwell to Harrison, 16 January 1964. GTA, PF, TI.

¹³L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 2 April 1962; Harrison to Letson, 2 April 1962; Letson to Harrison, 10 April 1962. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁴L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 6 March 1964. GTA, PF, TI.

¹⁵A few disappointing, poorly enrolled classes were offered by Southern Tech during this period, but these did not seriously conflict with the Off-Campus Center. See Annual Report, EED, 25 July 1962. STA.

evening.¹⁶ Meanwhile, the Off-Campus Center student population was growing as fast, or possibly faster, than was the Southern Tech student body. By late 1963, every classroom at Southern Tech which was available to the Center was in use, and still some classes were meeting elsewhere.¹⁷ Furthermore, the size of the Off-Campus Center was beginning to limit Southern Tech's opportunities for growth.¹⁸ An attitude also developed among some students and administration of the Off-Campus Center that it was not necessary to respect campus regulations (e.g., no hotrodding, no smoking in buildings).¹⁹ Even when a policy which restricted the freedom of the Off-Campus Center to academic matters was eventually issued by the Regents, it only underscored the developing reality that the arrangement of convenience for Southern Tech and for the Off-Campus Center had a limited life, and the limit was fast approaching.²⁰

Though the target student population was different for Southern Tech than for junior colleges, the rise of the junior college movement also became a source of concern for the school, especially when a junior college was planned for Cobb County.²¹ This concern was further intensified by a shift in attitude by Marietta and Cobb officials toward the new school, Kennesaw Junior College.²² In October 1965, Southern Tech hosted the dedication of a plaque honoring the Kiwanis Club of Marietta for their role in securing for the school a permanent campus in Cobb County. The event was attended by current and former officials of the city and county and included all the festivities appropriate for such an occasion.²³ However, the following May, at the groundbreaking for the new library, Marietta and Cobb officials were

¹⁶Annual Report, EED, 23 July 1964. STA.

¹⁷Smyrna Herald, 21 November 1963.

¹⁸MDJ, 9 August 1964.

¹⁹L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 2 December 1963; Harrison to Caldwell, 4 December 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

²⁰Caldwell to Harrison, 13 December 1963; Caldwell to Harrison, 16 January 1964. GTA, PF, TI.

²¹L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 8 February 1963. GTA, PF, TI.

²²The Engineering Technician, 15 November 1966. STA.

²³Smyrna Herald, 14 October 1965.

conspicuous by their absence.²⁴ Due to construction delays at its own campus, Kennesaw Junior College was initially housed on the Southern Tech campus, during which time it absorbed the Off-Campus Center.²⁵

Major changes in technology education and in the United States' society would profoundly affect Southern Tech's future. By the early 1960s, the technical institute movement had peaked nationally, and enrollments in two-year technical institutes reached a plateau. When Southern Tech was organized, technicians had been the liaison between the engineer and the craftsman. But as technology advanced, a new position, the engineering technologist, began to emerge between the engineer and the technician. Engineering technologists had the practical training of the technician but were also trained in non-technical subjects which enabled them to quickly move into middle and upper management. In order to provide the additional training, however, a four-year program was required. In fact, the four-year college program had become the societal norm, even if a person did not actually complete the degree.

As the United States increased its involvement in Vietnam, a four-year program became even more important to draft-eligible male students in their choice of a school. Escalation of military involvement after 1964 created a demand for military recruits since government policy was not to use the Ready Reserve to meet manpower requirements. Until 1968, it was possible for a male student enrolled full time in school automatically to receive a deferment from required military service while he studied, which made getting into and staying in college the chief objective for many draft-eligible young men.²⁶ But technical training is more difficult than many other college programs, and when combined with the two-year program at Southern Tech, the result was that many prospective students chose to attend four-year colleges and sought out other degree programs which would better ensure the

²⁴MDJ, 11 May 1966. Dignitaries attending included Joseph Guthridge, Vice-President for Development, Georgia Tech; Mrs. Dorothy Crosland, Director of Libraries, Georgia Tech; L. V. Johnson, Director of the Engineering Extension Division, Georgia Tech; and H. L. McClure, Director of Southern Tech. Further still, after the opening of Kennesaw Junior College later in the year, an editorial in the Marietta Daily Journal commented, ". . . finally a college which is part of the University System is in Cobb County...", as if Southern Tech did not even exist. (The irony is that the editor of the paper was himself one of those instrumental in bringing Southern Tech to Cobb County.) See The Engineering Technician, 15 November 1966.

²⁵Southern Tech Intercom, 14 September 1964. STA; MDJ, 21 August 1966.

²⁶The draft situation and its impact cannot be overstated. Virtually all aspects of American society felt its effect. Even many Southern Tech graduates had difficulty finding jobs during this period. See Annual Report, 24 June 1968. STA.

likelihood of remaining in college the full four years.²⁷ Perhaps equally ominous to the future of Southern Tech were the results of a 1963 study which indicated that even the quality of entering students was declining while only about half of the students entering Southern Tech even went on to graduate.²⁸

Southern Tech had begun as early as 1964 to undertake certain measures which would strengthen its competitiveness in a world of four-year institutions. A policy was implemented which required all new faculty to have completed a Master's Degree program when employed - a move which strengthened the faculty qualitatively and made it comparable to similar four-year schools.²⁹ Agreements were also established between Southern Tech and a number of four-year schools, whereby graduates of Southern Tech could transfer, sometimes with up to two full years of credit, to these schools and then complete a four year degree.³⁰ At first, these efforts had been primarily in response to the vo-tech and junior college movements; however, the changes also positioned the school to offer a degree in Engineering Technology, which was quickly becoming the standard in technology education around the country.³¹

During the 1965-66 academic year, it was clear that to remain competitive, Southern Tech also needed to develop a four-year program.³² The program the faculty envisioned would be constructed in such a way that though it was four-years in length, students only desiring the traditional two-year Associate of Engineering Technology degree could also be accommodated.³³ When the proposal for a four-year

²⁷MDJ, 15 December 1968.

²⁸Annual Report, 12 June 1963; Annual Report, EED, 15 July 1965; Annual Report, EED, 15 July 1966. STA.

²⁹Annual Report, EED, 23 July 1964. STA.

³⁰L. V. Johnson to Harrison, 6 March 1964. GTA, PF, TI.

³¹Annual Report, 30 June 1965. STA. Between 1962 and 1970, all nationally accredited technical institutes which existed in 1948 would become four-year institutions. Southern Tech would be the very last of these to make this change.

³²Annual Report, 1 July 1966. STA.

³³There are numerous ways such a program could be constructed. The 2+2 approach essentially adds two years of mostly non-technical courses in the junior and senior years (similar to the arrangements between Southern Tech and several four-year schools). The 3+2 approach integrates the technical and non-technical curricula more fully. The true four-year approach completely integrates

program at Southern Tech was completed, it was submitted to the Associated Industries of Georgia, who gave it an enthusiastic endorsement. Georgia Tech also quickly approved the idea and submitted it to the Chancellor's office in August 1967.³⁴ Unfortunately, the proposal languished in the Chancellor's office for three years.³⁵ Officials at Southern Tech had been optimistically forecasting a student body in excess of 2000 by 1970, but as the impact of the shift to a four-year program at the nation's leading technical institutes was felt, enrollment at Southern Tech peaked at 1340 students in 1965. Then, without approval from the Board of Regents to expand the program to four years, a gradual decline began.³⁶

At first the faculty, believing Southern Tech's future rested upon the proposal, continued working to fine-tune the four-year program and to prepare to implement it. However, by 1969, there was much less optimism. Enrollments had declined over 10%, and high school counselors were vocal and unanimous about their inability to promote Southern Tech to their students as long as it remained only a two-year program.³⁷ Lack of action on the proposal for a four-year program resulted in a significant decline in campus morale and made any meaningful program planning almost impossible. On the "drawing board" was a plan for architectural consulting to builders, a computer science concentration, and a management curriculum (instead of only a management option).³⁸ Yet none of these could be realistically developed any further until a resolution of the question of a four-year program occurred. Similarly, in 1967, an Apparel Manufacturing option was initiated with the backing of the American Apparel Manufacturers Association. This was established with the

both curricula into a single package. In an effort to retain the two-year degree, a modified 2+2 plan was constructed.

³⁴Annual Report, 1 July 1967; Annual Report, EED, 7 July 1967; Annual Report, EED, 27 June 1968. STA.

³⁵At least two principle reasons exist for this delay. The on-going struggle between the federal government and the state of Georgia concerning integration usurped an inordinate amount of attention at the Chancellor's office. In addition, there were problems between the Chancellor and Georgia Tech's president. (On this see below).

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷Annual Report, 30 June 1969. STA. The decline was less than in other two-year technical institutes nationally, but among four-year technical schools, enrollments were still rising! Clearly it was the two-year program which was undermining Southern Tech's growth.

³⁸MDJ, 10 August 1969.

expectation that sophisticated research could be carried on at Southern Tech once it became a four-year school. This, too, was now in doubt.

Admittedly, the Southern Tech proposal was unusual in that Southern Tech was a part of Georgia Tech rather than an independent institution, such as a junior college seeking to become a senior college. But a serious personality issue was also intruding upon the joint Southern Tech-Georgia Tech proposal to make Southern Tech a four-year school; this involved Georgia Tech's President, E. D. Harrison, and George L. Simpson, Jr., the University System Chancellor.³⁹ When it seemed apparent that nothing was prompting action by the Chancellor on the four-year proposal, a group of Southern Tech alumni, spearheaded by James Snyder, Clyde Shaw, and Burt Brown, began an independent drive to get the proposal passed.⁴⁰ In early January 1969, they met with Governor Maddox to seek his support. A petition signed by 63 Southern Tech alumni was presented to him at that time. In addition, they sought the support of the American Party, organized in association with Alabama Governor George Wallace's bid for the presidency of the United States and a movement for which the governor had seemed to indicate his support.⁴¹ The governor expressed his pleasure to the graduates and agreed that the four-year program seemed like a good idea, but no further commitment was made.

In January 1969, however, President Harrison resigned from Georgia Tech. No immediate progress on Southern Tech's proposal occurred while Georgia Tech underwent the necessary administrative reorganization. However, Harrison's successor, Arnold Hansen, was from the Georgia Tech faculty, was familiar with the proposal, and supported it as well. By October 1969, two Regents' committees supported the proposal, which had been updated and refined to include an outline of

³⁹Interview with H. L. McClure, 24 August 1995. STA. It is a matter of record that during the last years of Harrison's presidency no buildings, such as a student center or a physical plant building, were approved for Southern Tech, though virtually every other institution in the University System got such needs met. In fact, within 36 months of Dr. Harrison's resignation, the Regents were approving numerous proposals for Southern Tech as well. That this was not caused by some fault in Dr. Harrison's office is borne out by the Southern Tech administration from that period and by his enthusiastic support for Southern Tech. It was when George Simpson became the Chancellor that a drastic change took place for Georgia Tech and Southern Tech in getting things through the Chancellor's office. This resulted from some fundamental differences between Simpson and Harrison.

⁴⁰MDJ, 28 January 1969.

⁴¹MDJ, 28 January 1969.

how the schools would relate to one another.⁴² When the package was again submitted to the Chancellor in January 1970 swift action ensued. At the March meeting of the Regents, it was agreed to make Southern Tech a four-year institution effective with the fall quarter, 1970, and the first degrees could be awarded in 1971.⁴³ Southern Tech, thereby, joined all of the major technical institutes in the nation in offering a four-year degree.

The approval of a four-year degree program at Southern Tech had a dramatic effect on both Georgia Tech and Southern Tech. There were myriad adjustments, curriculum changes, faculty searches, and new course decisions to be made and carried out within the next six months. This process was complicated by the requirements of the Regents' "Core Curriculum" approach for all of the schools within the State University System, which it was now necessary for Southern Tech to meet.⁴⁴ In carrying out the changes on campus, the Air Conditioning, Heating, and Ventilation Department was merged into that of Mechanical Engineering Technology. Existing courses in all departments were modified to accommodate the new courses. Eight new instructors were hired immediately (with twice that number expected to be needed by fall 1971). A new administrative structure was also introduced for the school. The chief administrative officer's position was elevated to that of Dean, and the former Acting Dean of Georgia Tech's College of Engineering, Walter O. Carlson, was appointed to that position. Hoyt L. McClure, who had served as Director of Southern Tech since 1959, was made the Associate Dean. Generally, the Dean was responsible for all academic matters on campus, while the Associate Dean handled non-academic matters.⁴⁵

⁴²MDJ, 10 August 1969; MDJ, 31 December 1969. Also, by this time most of the articulation agreements with four-year schools had expired or been terminated, and the two remaining ones were under review by those schools as they reassessed their goals. These had enabled students to finish a four-year degree, after graduating from Southern Tech.

⁴³MDJ, 11 March 1970.

⁴⁴Annual Report, 30 June 1970. STA. A total of 100 additional quarter credit hours had to be added for the new degree program. These included: Descriptive Geometry, Graphical Solutions, Technical Illustrations, Electronic Drawing, Probability and Statistics, Computer Programming, Nuclear Radiation Physics, Astronomy, American History, World History, Differential Equations, Chemistry of Air and Water Pollution, Organic Chemistry I & II, Biology I & II, and Geology.

⁴⁵Annual Report, 18 June 1971. STA. MDJ, 14 January 1971. For most of the 1970s, Dean Carlson reported to the Dean of Georgia Tech's College of Engineering, who reported in turn to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. The latter reported to Georgia Tech's president. As Associate Dean, McClure reported to Dean Carlson.

This new organizational structure resulted in the dismantling of the Engineering Extension Division of Georgia Tech. For its entire existence, Southern Tech had been part of this division, and eventually its major area of activity. With the shift to a four-year profile, however, Southern Tech was placed under the College of Engineering, while the Extension Division's other functions were absorbed elsewhere.⁴⁶ Continuing Education became a separate division at Georgia Tech, and the Industrial Education Department was relocated to Southern Tech.⁴⁷ The Director of the Engineering Extension Division since 1959 and former Director of Southern Tech, L. V. Johnson, was made Associate Dean for Technology of the College of Engineering. His responsibilities included coordination of the programs of the College of Engineering with those of Southern Tech and assisting Dean Carlson as necessary, for which purpose, he maintained an office on the Southern Tech campus.⁴⁸ After his retirement in 1972, Johnson continued his work with Southern Tech, particularly through travel and promotion of the school's program.

Monumental changes attended the shift to a four-year institution, particularly during the initial adjustments of the first two years. The majority of students graduating under the two-year program decided to remain for the full four years.⁴⁹ When combined with increased freshmen enrollments, Southern Tech experienced an almost 35% increase in its student enrollment over the previous year.⁵⁰ But this increase taxed the existing physical facilities of the school: classroom space was at maximum utilization; dormitories needed repair and/or renovation; a physical plant building was desperately needed to free up additional classroom and office space. Also, an athletic field for varsity and personal student use and a student center were needed for student organizations and activities. Extracurricular and recreational activities also needed to be increased in order to help students occupy their time when

⁴⁶This had actually been proposed during the controversy with Van Leer over funding back in 1951 and 1952. At that time, the school needed flexibility which such a reorganization would not permit. During the move to Cobb County, the role and relationship of the two schools was again revisited, but general agreement ensued that the same structure should continue.

⁴⁷Of major importance in this regard was the Fire Training Institute, on which see below.

⁴⁸Annual Report, EED, 30 June 1970. STA. Briefly during the first year as a four-year school, McClure had remained Director, reporting to Johnson, who had already been made Associate Dean. This arrangement was quickly changed to provide more direct administration and organization for Southern Tech as a four-year school.

⁴⁹Annual Report, 30 June 1970. STA.

⁵⁰Annual Report, 18 June 1971. STA. Fall 1970 reported an enrollment of 1627 students.

not studying.⁵¹

Faculty salaries were substantially below those of faculty in other four-year schools of the University System. This problem needed addressing in order to attract new faculty for the four-year program as well as to retain present faculty. It was also necessary for the SACS and ECPD organizations to reaccredit the school based on its new status.⁵² Though new programs could be considered, including Bio-Engineering Technology, Nuclear Science Technology, Computer Science Technology, and Water Treatment, relationships between departments were already strained.⁵³ Major problems in communication had developed as the school expanded. "Turf battles" erupted between some departments, especially concerning courses and classrooms. The Placement Office had difficulty in obtaining the names of graduates from the Registrar's Office. The Electrical Engineering Technology Department, long one of the strongest on campus, asserted a sense of primacy; the English Department absorbed responsibility for teaching history under the four-year curriculum, thought it got too little respect from the other departments, and presumed to advise the Dean on such issues as enrollment forecasting, "needless" paperwork, and the "true role" of Southern Tech.⁵⁴ The English Department, in particular, underwent a substantial shift in emphasis - from courses primarily in practical skills and communications in support of the technical programs, to offering courses in the humanities and the liberal arts more typically found at other colleges. This meant that some departments found it necessary to surrender responsibility for certain courses to the English Department (e.g., Psychology, previously offered by the Industrial Engineering Technology Department, was shifted to the newly organized English and Social Studies Department).⁵⁵

Though communication between Southern Tech and Georgia Tech was even more important than previously, the schools lacked a regular intercampus mail service. The frequent communication directly with the president of Georgia Tech which Southern Tech had always enjoyed now had to pass through the Dean of the College of Engineering on the Georgia Tech campus, thereby adding another level of

⁵¹Annual Report, 30 June 1970. STA. MDJ, 31 January 1971.

⁵²SACS reaccreditation came in 1973. ECPD reaccreditation came the same year. MDJ, 22 January 1973; MDJ, 9 February 1973; MDJ, 23 August 1973.

⁵³Annual Report, 18 June 1971. STA.

⁵⁴Ibid. The examples are from reports of individual departments.

⁵⁵Ibid.

bureaucracy.⁵⁶ Furthermore, many Georgia Tech policies, e.g. those affecting promotion and tenure, were inappropriate for Southern Tech; but as a branch of the College of Engineering, these policies were nevertheless applicable.⁵⁷ Southern Tech varsity sports teams still sought to compete, but the relationship to those of Georgia Tech was unsettled and left open the possibility of intra-school competition. Auxiliary Services (dining hall, bookstore, etc.) were included in the reorganization as well but generally enjoyed a greater degree of autonomy than previously. Physical Plant, under Georgia Tech since 1961, became more closely linked to Georgia Tech after 1970.

Some of the problems of transition to a four-year program were successfully addressed, but some continued to exist on the campus long afterwards. The move to completely separate from Georgia Tech would be fueled, in part, by some of the problems left unresolved during the transition to a four year school. Dean Carlson came from Georgia Tech and had been a participant in the decisions involving Southern Tech's four-year status and subsequent administrative reorganization. He seemingly considered Southern Tech an important part of Georgia Tech's overall engineering program, and during his administration, the school was drawn more tightly into the orbit of Georgia Tech.⁵⁸ However, the schools had different goals. President Harrison had recognized this in 1959-60, and offered to help Southern Tech become independent at that time. It was concern on the part of the Southern Tech faculty that the school was not ready for that yet that pre-empted further action at the time.⁵⁹ Even Van Leer had seemed aware that eventually the school would need to be independent of Georgia Tech. During the 1970s, Southern Tech matured, especially as it grew to claim its four-year status. But with maturity came an increasing need to be independent, unfortunately at the very same time that the administrations of both institutions were pushing for a closer relationship, perhaps

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷As a research institution, policies relating to promotion and tenure involved academic degrees held, research, and publication. With an applied technology program, Southern Tech had long considered industrial experience and professional licensing important, in some cases even more than advanced degrees.

⁵⁸For example, when the existing private security contract expired with Southern Detective Agency, Georgia Tech took over security affairs for Southern Tech (MDJ, 10 July 1972); in 1974, Georgia Tech opened a Continuing Education branch office on the Southern Tech campus to offer courses for business, government agencies, and individuals (MDJ, 15 September 1974).

⁵⁹Interview with H. L. McClure, 24 August 1995. STA.

even formalizing Southern Tech as the Marietta Campus of Georgia Tech, along with appropriate name changes. These underlying differences made the decade of the 1970s a period in which tension was always just beneath the surface, along with concomitant suspicions and uncertainties.

The decade of Dean Carlson's tenure (1970-1980) had many important successes and moved the school forward in spite of any tensions. As called for in the proposal to elevate Southern Tech to four-year status, the first Bachelor's degrees were awarded in June 1971, to students who already possessed advanced credit through transfer.⁶⁰ Student social fraternities began associating with national student fraternal organizations; the first ones to be chartered at Southern Tech were Sigma Pi (ΣΠ) and Tau Kappa Epsilon (TKE).⁶¹ In 1974, the library was made a repository for topographic maps of Georgia issued by the Georgia Department of Transportation.⁶² In September of that year, the W. Clair Harris Chair in Apparel Engineering Technology was established.⁶³

In 1976, Southern Tech was designated a Bicentennial campus.⁶⁴ Since 1974, the school had sponsored a "Community Dialogues" series. This series featured U. S. Congressman Larry McDonald and Professor Michael Mescon as part of the campus' participation in the Bicentennial celebrations.⁶⁵ In addition, the Southern Tech library compiled and published American Domestic Architecture to 1900: A Bibliography, which became part of Georgia Tech's exhibits program in conjunction with the Bicentennial. This same year, the Southern Tech Foundation was formally organized to promote faculty development scholarships and to acquire and administer

⁶⁰MDJ, 12 June 1971. The top student, Richard Bryant Hayes, graduated with a 3.6 overall average GPA, receiving the BS in Architectural Engineering Technology.

⁶¹AC, 25 October 1972.

⁶²MDJ, 12 July 1974.

⁶³Carlson to Moriarty (President of the American Apparel Foundation for Education), 26 September 1974. STA, President's Files.

⁶⁴Amos St. Germain to Georgia Tech Bicentennial Committee, 14 August 1975; Carlson to A. K. Johnson, 1 October 1975; Minutes of the Georgia Tech Bicentennial Committee, 10 November 1975; Telegram: M. T. Swinehart to Carlson, 19 December 1975. STA, President's Files.

⁶⁵McDonald spoke on 20 November 1975, and Mescon on 15 January 1976.

property and trust funds in support of the school.⁶⁶ The following year, a national academic conference, INTERFACE, was organized by the English Department to promote dialogue between the Humanities and the Scientific and Technological spheres of endeavor.⁶⁷ During these years, joint Associate Degree programs in Textile Management were initiated with various junior colleges around the state. Under this arrangement, Southern Tech offered the technical courses for students while the remaining coursework was provided by the junior colleges.⁶⁸ In some ways, these successes made Southern Tech even more prepared to become independent and may have intensified the underlying momentum for separation, which by 1977 was already strongly underway.

From the beginning of its existence, the orientation of Southern Tech was both academic and focused on addressing the needs of industry and the state. During the school's first two decades, this was done through creating an outstanding technical institute program whose graduates were employed throughout the state of Georgia and the southeastern region of the country, and even nationally and internationally, and through special courses which were offered to industry. Between from 1976 and 1983, in an effort to expand this program the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department (as it would later be renamed) offered courses for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) personnel at the Hampton and Atlanta Regional Airports.⁶⁹ However, the move of the Georgia Fire Institute to Southern Tech's campus took the commitment to industry and the state a step further by developing an entire program around a statewide need. This program also brought with it a number of benefits, including enlargement of the administration building; construction of a physical plant building; statewide publicity for the school; and, indirectly perhaps, construction of a student center on campus.

In the early 1930s, ten area coordinator-instructors in Fire Safety had been

⁶⁶AJ, 5 November 1976.

⁶⁷MDJ, 17 March 1977. Professors Robert Fischer and Amos St. Germain spearheaded this effort.

⁶⁸Charles Stevens (STI Associate Dean for Academics) to Denny Freeston (Director, Georgia Tech School of Textiles), 1 October 1976; Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 18 May 1978. STA, President's Files. The first two junior colleges included in the program were Floyd and Gordon, approved by Regents' action in November 1975, and in place in January and February 1976, respectively. In 1978, Columbus College was added to that number. The program was initially successful, but suffered declining interest so that it was formally discontinued everywhere in 1982.

⁶⁹Carlson to Howard Jordan, Jr. (Vice-Chancellor for Services), 26 November 1975. STA, President's Files.

appointed in association with Georgia Tech. The program was placed under the Industrial Education section of the Engineering Extension Division, after its formation in 1945. Through the Firefighter Program, basic firefighting courses were conducted throughout the state. In 1956, Governor Griffin asked Georgia Tech to consider establishing a Fire Fighting degree program. Georgia Tech's Acting President, Paul Weber, appointed a commission to study the idea. The committee concluded that the best approach was to offer a Fire Training Institute which would continue to be organized under the Engineering Extension Division and thus be under the control of the Board of Regents.⁷⁰ By the 1960s, First Class Firefighters diplomas were being issued through the program. By then, colleges in a number of states had begun to offer two- and four-year programs in Fire Science, and the Georgia Firefighters Association began to seek a statewide training center through Georgia Tech.⁷¹

Responding to the interest of the state Firefighters Association, Dallas Cox, Director of the Industrial Education section and the Fire Training program, asked Georgia Tech to again consider developing a full-time Fire Protection Technology program.⁷² In 1967, the pace to establish a Fire Institute Training Center intensified as broad political support was voiced for the program. The General Assembly formed a committee to consider the need and feasibility for such a training center. In June 1967, the Georgia Municipal Association formed a committee to survey Georgia's fire departments regarding their utilization of such a center.⁷³ The drive for some sort of training center remained at the forefront of the political agenda, spurred by a report in December 1967 that Georgia was lagging behind other states in fire technology education. When the report of the legislative committee urged that any program be an expansion of the present Fire Institute on the Georgia Tech campus, the General Assembly requested a copy of Georgia Tech's study with the intention of taking some definitive action during the 1969 legislative session.⁷⁴

During this time, the 1968 annual Fire Training school was conducted on the campus of Southern Tech. It was larger and considered more successful than any of

⁷⁰Annual Report, EED, 25 June 1969. STA.

⁷¹Annual Report, EED, 7 July 1967. STA.

⁷²Annual Report, EED, 15 July 1966. STA.

⁷³Annual Report, EED, 25 June 1969. STA.

⁷⁴Annual Report, EED, 27 June 1968. STA. The Georgia Tech study had urged that the Fire Institute program be continued under the Engineering Extension Division of Georgia Tech, which at the time also still supervised Southern Tech.

the previous 36 schools. The success of this school and the numerous requests to return to the Southern Tech campus for the 1969 school was not lost on those involved in deliberations regarding a training center for the Fire Institute. In January 1969, the General Assembly approved the establishment of a Fire Institute Training Center on the Southern Tech campus as an expansion of the existing Georgia Tech program and funded by the Legislature.⁷⁵ It also urged development of a two-year Fire Technology degree program. The formal request, submitted by Georgia Tech's outgoing president on February 28, 1969, included an addition to the existing administration building to accommodate the office needs of the Fire Institute and a new Physical Plant building, with the one currently in use to be converted for the Fire Institute.⁷⁶ In addition a new athletic field was to be constructed while a drill tower and Fire Academy (including a fire test laboratory and a small lake to test water pumpers) would be built on the old athletic field.⁷⁷ To support the request, the General Assembly allocated \$300,000 to be administered through the Board of Regents.⁷⁸

Work also began immediately on the development of a degree program, influenced by the statewide location of firefighting facilities. According to the program developed, a student would receive technical instruction through Southern Tech faculty members, while the non-technical coursework could be done at colleges and/or junior colleges near the student's hometown.⁷⁹ While it was planned that technical courses be offered at the Fire Institute Training Center on Southern Tech's campus, the program was begun during the 1972 fall quarter with Southern Tech faculty traveling to regional centers to offer the technical courses needed for a major in Fire Science Technology leading to an Associate degree.⁸⁰ The beginning of the

⁷⁵Annual Report, EED, 25 June 1969. STA.

⁷⁶MDJ, 15 August 1971.

⁷⁷MDJ, 22 July 1973. The field was dedicated, on 21 May 1975, to the memory of S. Walter Kelley, Sr., who worked as the liaison between various city and county offices during the negotiations over Cobb County's proposal to move Southern Tech to its present campus. MDJ, 22 May 1975.

⁷⁸MDJ, 20 June 1971. The proposal submitted by Harrison was subsequently updated and resubmitted by his successor, Arnold Hansen, in September 1969. It was not actually funded, however, until the 1971 Legislative Session. Annual Report, EED, 30 June 1970. STA.

⁷⁹MDJ, 27 September 1970.

⁸⁰MDJ, 25 August 1972.

degree program thus preceded the building of facilities to support the newly relocating Fire Institute, which moved to the Southern Tech campus in 1973 and 1974.⁸¹ Only during fall quarter 1975 did Fire Science Technology courses begin to be offered on the Southern Tech campus.⁸²

The Fire Institute training program would continue on the Southern Tech campus until 1987.⁸³ On August 4 of that year, the Georgia Board of Public Safety recommended the official transfer of the Georgia Fire Academy to the Georgia Public Safety Training Center at Forsyth in Monroe County.⁸⁴ At that time, the property on campus previously deeded to the state for the Fire Academy was declared surplus and returned to the Board of Regents, which subsequently returned it to Southern Tech.⁸⁵ There are a variety of reasons suggested for the closing of the program at Southern Tech. Most of these center around one primary cause: lack of support by the superintendents, which undermined interest in the program among the firefighters themselves. By 1987, few were interested in pursuing a degree in Fire Science Technology, and the program could no longer be justified. For Southern Tech, there had also been a significantly negative aspect to the development of the program. For over 20 years, Southern Tech had frequently been confused as being a vo-tech. Faculty and administration at Southern Tech had exerted tremendous effort during that time to distinguish the school's level of education, struggling through changes in curriculum and degree designations. In the later 1960s, the challenge of junior college education, also administered under the University System of Georgia, siphoned off support for Southern Tech from the region, possibly also from Regents, along with prospective students. In 1970, when the school became a four-year institution, a breath of life swept through the school as the four-year program dramatically distinguished Southern Tech from these other institutions. But almost immediately

⁸¹MDJ, 9 March 1973; MDJ, 5 April 1973; MDJ, 7 October 1973.

⁸²AJ, Cobb Edition, 27 August 1975. The yearly Fire Training schools, however, had continued to be offered on the campus each summer, following the pattern begun in 1968.

⁸³In November 1980, President Cheshier would receive permission to discontinue the Fire Science program. Lack of support by local fire departments for this education resulted in few interested students and undermined recruiting efforts for the program, contributing to its failure. The related Fire Academy would not depart until 1986. Cheshier to Crawford, 18 November 1980. STA. Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 9-10 December 1980. STA, Presidential Files.

⁸⁴State of Georgia Executive Order, 8 September 1987. President's Office, SPSU. By this time the program was no longer effectively operational on campus.

⁸⁵Ibid.

a parallel move began to make Kennesaw Junior College into a four-year school as well.⁸⁶ During this same period of time, the Fire Institute was relocated to the Southern Tech campus; but the program was only a two-year program leading to an Associate degree and widely viewed as vocational in character. In all of Southern Tech's other programs, virtually no two-year graduates were to be found any longer; however, it was the Fire Institute which got the biggest "press" coverage. To make matters worse, the Fire Institute was partially funded by the Georgia Department of Education's Division of Vocational Education, lending support to the vo-tech identity both for the program and for Southern Tech.⁸⁷ Twenty-five years after the move of the Fire Institute to Southern Tech, many in the local area do not realize that Southern Tech offers a full college program and is not just another vo-tech.

Another program undertaken during the Carlson years involved retraining of engineers who had lost their jobs during the economic slowdown of the early 1970s. The problems began in 1970 in Aerospace and Defense, then spread to industry itself as the market for available engineers became flooded. The impact on technological professions nationwide was devastating and brought a possibly premature plateau in Southern Tech enrollments as well. However, the situation also presented an opportunity for technological schools which were willing to help retrain engineers. Such students already possessed the technical background and skills for engineering but needed some training in related areas in which there was a need for their experience.⁸⁸ Sharing a \$233,000 federal grant, Georgia Tech and Southern Tech created an eight-week construction and traffic engineering retraining program, taught on the Southern Tech campus. Rated by the National Society of Professional Engineers as highly successful, the program subsequently placed virtually all those who enrolled.⁸⁹

Campus life during the 1970s was, in many ways, a continuation of the later 1960s; but as a four-year school, Southern Tech underwent some significant changes: more students; new organizations; and for the first time, a significant female student population. The first year as a four-year school was explosive, literally, when a small

⁸⁶MDJ, 12 March 1970. This would, in fact, become a reality in April 1976.

⁸⁷MDJ, 25 January 1973.

⁸⁸AJC, 24 February 1974.

⁸⁹Ibid. In 1972, only one of the 25 enrolled in the program was not placed. Subsequently, the success rate remained high, but not as high as this first year.

homemade bomb exploded late one evening outside the dormitory and dining hall.⁹⁰ Fortunately, no one was injured, but 12 windows were shattered and a two-foot-wide hole was created in the decorative concrete latticework. The local police, after their slow arrival, were greeted by a crowd of about 100 students. Harsh words were exchanged and some of the students were temporarily detained. Since the dormitories had been partially funded by federal money, the FBI entered and eventually took charge of the investigation. It was determined that the bomb had been made in the metal shop at Southern Tech and that a sophomore with no previous disciplinary record was responsible.⁹¹

In the 1960s, substantial numbers of women began to enter the male-dominated field of engineering. Before 1960, the few women who had sought a technical education usually went to four-year, research-oriented schools. Although Southern Tech, unlike Georgia Tech, had never been an exclusively male institution, only rarely were coeds part of the student body. It had never been necessary to make provisions for those who did enroll. In fact cheerleaders, campus sweethearts, and other such roles had been filled by young women not enrolled at Southern Tech. However, the increasing number of women in technology began to affect Southern Tech's enrollment soon after its elevation to a four-year program. During the summer of 1971, fourteen coeds were enrolled in classes.⁹² By early 1974, the number of women enrolling at the school had reached 17% of the student body.⁹³ It was apparent that Southern Tech would need to find a means of offering housing for a female student population, too, and not just for the men. During the summer of 1974, an end of the fourth floor of Howell dormitory was renovated for use by female students.⁹⁴ Security doors were installed, bathroom facilities renovated, and 15 double-occupancy rooms were made available. The only specific exclusions to normal campus life for the female students were no physical education classes and no female

⁹⁰AJ, 14 April 1971. The explosion occurred at 11:45 p.m. the previous evening.

⁹¹MDJ, 13 July 1971. The student, Phillip Quinton Cochran, was not actually enrolled during the summer quarter, when apprehended, but had been permitted to continue to live in the dormitory while working a summer job.

⁹²MDJ, 20 July 1971.

⁹³AJ, 6 February 1974.

⁹⁴MDJ, 25 September 1974.

athletic teams.⁹⁵ On the other hand, fall quarter 1974 was the first time that Southern Tech's cheerleaders were drawn from among its own students. A new organization on campus, Women in Technology, was formed by the coeds under the leadership of Professor Roberta Gates of the English Department.⁹⁶ The goal of this organization was to emphasize women's concerns on campus (e.g. showers in the gymnasium). To balance the male orientation of the campus, speakers were invited who would address issues related to women in engineering and business, and industry tours oriented to women's concerns were organized.

One of the most significant student-focused activities that underwent tremendous change during the 1970s was the sports program. Ever since the early days of the school, there had been varsity and intramural sports competitions. Occasionally a good team or an outstanding individual might excel, a few even signing with national baseball leagues upon graduation. But the two-year program prior to 1970 was too brief to allow the growth and mature development needed for strong sports teams. Also, only certain sports were permitted at Southern Tech, lest they conflict with Georgia Tech's program.⁹⁷ There were essentially no sports scholarships for students who wanted to study at Southern Tech and participate in a varsity team, which weakened the team recruiting effort and the overall program. In addition, any students who did engage in organized competitions still had a heavy class load and significant outside study to do while maintaining the discipline of team practices. The coaching staff was either funded through "alternative sources" (such as student activity fees) or placed in a split position, where their primary responsibilities involved some other position at the school (either in administration or as faculty). In the mid-1960s, there were a few winning seasons, but even then, at basketball games, it was said that more high school coaches than Southern Tech spectators attended.

In March 1971, after 15 years as the head coach, Harry Lockhart submitted his resignation.⁹⁸ Even after Southern Tech had become a four-year school, Lockhart

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶MDJ, "Today" Section, 24 November 1976. Membership was open to both male and female students.

⁹⁷Football was considered too expensive and Georgia Tech already had a strong team. Basketball and baseball were permitted, but under a different college athletic association than that of Georgia Tech. Wrestling, and sometimes other sports might be permitted if not in conflict with Georgia Tech's program.

⁹⁸MDJ, 4 March 1971.

still had no budget with which to work and nothing to offer potential recruits.⁹⁹ He was convinced to remain as coach, but after another year with what he considered unimpressive efforts to build the sports budget, he departed.¹⁰⁰ Assistant coach Fran Florian succeeded Lockhart; and then during the 1974-76 academic years, Charlie Lumsden took the position as head coach. Though during these four years (1972-1976) a few athletic scholarships were offered to prospective students for the first time, the teams' experiences continued to be lackluster.¹⁰¹ When George Perides was subsequently named the new head coach, almost immediately there was a turnaround in the sports program.¹⁰² During his first and second seasons, the Southern Tech Hornets basketball team went to the regional finals in sudden-death elimination rounds.¹⁰³ These sports successes helped electrify a campus which by then was otherwise experiencing a great deal of tension related to its relationship with Georgia Tech. While not all subsequent seasons have been as exciting as these first ones under Coach Perides, Southern Tech continues to field good teams with an impressive record and to enjoy faculty, student, and staff support.

In 1972, a controversial tradition was initiated on the campus: Goat Day. One campus legend had it that some years earlier, a member of the previous administration had become so frustrated that one day he tied up a goat near the administration building on campus.¹⁰⁴ The celebration of Goat Day was turned into a public relations festival with Bar-B-Que, a Miss Southern Tech pageant (with contestants from among the increasingly coed student body), contests, and a dance in the evening.¹⁰⁵ The primary goal was to strengthen the level of faculty, staff, and

⁹⁹In all fairness, it should be noted that when the school received four-year approval, this was without any supplemental funding, and well into the 1980s the school continued to suffer financially because it was always playing "catch-up" rather than being funded at a rate consistent with its status.

¹⁰⁰MDJ, 13 June 1971; MDJ, 13 April 1972.

¹⁰¹MDJ, 14 July 1972; MDJ, 16 July 1972; MDJ, 11 July 1976.

¹⁰²MDJ, 20 November 1977. One of the important changes he made almost immediately was to change to the Georgia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. He also reduced the number of sports from five to three, which permitted more focus. See Saber, Columbus College, 18 October 1976.

¹⁰³MDJ, 20 February 1978; Sting, 5 March 1979. STA.

¹⁰⁴MDJ, 30 October 1974.

¹⁰⁵MDJ, 10 November 1972.

student fraternization and to help bond the various organizations and groups on campus.¹⁰⁶ During 1973, following a public reference to Southern Tech as a vo-tech by then-Governor Jimmy Carter or his staff, Carter hastily visited the campus, expressed his support for the school, and proclaimed October 27, 1973 Goat Day Festival at Southern Tech.¹⁰⁷ The tradition eventually diminished as other public relations activities became popular on campus but was kept alive as a day of competition among fraternities and sororities for a number of years thereafter. In 1974, a "streaking craze" spread across college campuses in Georgia. Such incidents also occurred on the Southern Tech campus.¹⁰⁸ At first, only male students were involved, but before the wave subsided, some 50 students including coeds had participated in an event lasting several hours.¹⁰⁹

A major building project, lingering since the move to Cobb County, and of increasing importance to students and campus life, was the building of a student center. Once the gymnasium was built, it was possible to meet with large groups at one time in that facility. However, places for small groups of students to meet, for student organizations, or for private recreation were minimal or did not exist at all. As had been the case with most building projects at Southern Tech up until that time, funding for a student center was ultimately secured only through political action.¹¹⁰ The case presented in support of the student center also reflected the awkwardness of the relationship which existed between Georgia Tech, Southern Tech, and the University System. Every other institution in the University System had a student center. In fact, even Kennesaw Junior College had a \$1,400,000 center approved in

¹⁰⁶With the increasing level of tension, bonding was an important goal, but the effectualness of Goat Day in doing this does not seem to have been great.

¹⁰⁷Proclamation, 25 October 1973. In August 1973, while pushing to make Kennesaw Junior College into a four-year school, in a letter to the Chancellor, Carter referred to Southern Tech as a vo-tech! This letter was published in the Marietta Daily Journal on 19 August 1973. Carter subsequently sent a letter of apology to Southern Tech and hastily arranged to visit the campus on 27 August, during which time he offered his whole-hearted support for the school.

¹⁰⁸MDJ, 6 March 1974. In the early 1970s, incidents in which nude students ran or walked across a campus, or even in nearby towns, were common, if not frequent.

¹⁰⁹MDJ, 8 March 1974.

¹¹⁰Interview with H. L. McClure, 24 August 1995. Normally funding would be through a queue prepared by the Board of Regents, and when funding reached far enough down the list, and/or an institution's need caused it to move high enough on the priority list, it got funding through the regular annual allocation to the University System by the Georgia Legislature.

1972. But as part of Georgia Tech, a student center for Southern Tech could only be funded if it was approved by Georgia Tech and followed the normal process for funding requests. If Georgia Tech chose to rank the student center behind other construction requests which Georgia Tech considered of greater priority, there was little within the regular system which the Southern Tech administration could do.

At a "friendly confrontation" with Dean McClure in March 1973, students pressed their desire for a student center.¹¹¹ Speaking honestly with the students, he explained that for five years this issue had topped the priority list submitted by Southern Tech to officials at Georgia Tech. Students challenged the integrity of the administration, to which McClure replied that what the students needed to do was to get out and push for the building. This was especially important in that the student center was rising on the state funding priority list at that time. With this, the students began to lobby intensely for the center. A document prepared by Southern Tech student James Axley, and forwarded to the Board of Regents, asserted the neglect of this issue by "the System." Within days, Cobb County business and civic leaders were adding their voices to those of the students. Even the Cobb legislative delegation became involved to some extent.¹¹² The effort succeeded in quickly pushing the student center to the top of the Regent's priority list. So much was this the case that even though the capital funds budget was being cut due to a squeeze in available funds, at the Regent's meeting of March 16, 1973, it was nevertheless decided to fund the student center at Southern Tech.¹¹³ Many of the students who had pushed for the student center would only see it as graduates, however. Funding was obtained as part of an \$11.3 million bond issue sold in 1974, and construction did not begin until 1975.¹¹⁴ The center was finally opened to student use at the beginning of spring quarter 1977.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹MDJ, 9 March 1973.

¹¹²MDJ, 20 March 1973. The following year, while running for re-election, Joe Mack Wilson took credit for obtaining funds for the student center as well as for student buildings elsewhere while on the appropriations committee. MDJ, 30 October 1974. Clearly, Jack Henderson, who had long been a major voice for education in Cobb County as a member of the Legislature, was also a significant participant in the struggle to fund the student center.

¹¹³MDJ, 21 March 1973. Inflation had already begun to accelerate with the end to hostilities in Vietnam, squeezing federal, state, and local governments and institutions, as well as individual citizens, and causing the budgetary austerity.

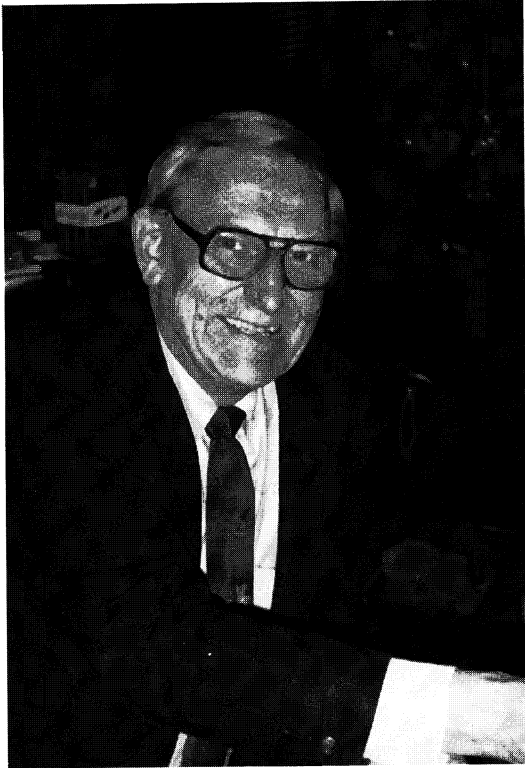
¹¹⁴MDJ, 26 February 1975.

¹¹⁵MDJ, 17 March 1977. Opening date was 28 March 1977.

The expansion of the Southern Tech program, its faculty, administration, staff, and students in 1970 created a different world from the one the school had previously known. The Vietnam era and the age of "Rights" movements which proliferated during the late 1960s and into the 1970s added to these differences by making confrontation and open disagreement acceptable as civil activity and political methodology. On the Southern Tech campus, the tensions of expansion and change increasingly focused around a single issue: the relationship between Southern Tech and Georgia Tech. A new president at Georgia Tech during the early 1970s and the increasingly closer ties he and Dean Carlson seemed to be forging for the two schools led to questions on the Southern Tech campus about the future and the relationship between the two schools. There were numerous retirements and personnel changes at Southern Tech after 1975, but the tension persisted. When Dr. Vernon Crawford, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Georgia Tech, became acting-Chancellor in 1979, the situation reached a crescendo.



Bathtub racing at its finest. Along the campus course.



Dr. Walter O. Carlson, Dean of Southern Technical Institute, 1971-1980.

CHAPTER 5

Independence

The issue of Southern Tech's relationship to Georgia Tech became increasingly problematic as each decade passed. In its first years, Southern Tech needed the umbrella of Georgia Tech for survival. Even after three years of successful operation, it was only in 1951, when Georgia Tech President Van Leer proposed to close the school and absorb its program into that of Georgia Tech, that the Board of Regents began to deal with Southern Tech as a separate-but-related school to Georgia Tech. Subsequently, discussions began concerning the relationship between the two schools and their organizational structure. It was never a foregone conclusion on the part of the administration of either school that Southern Tech would always remain part of Georgia Tech or that Southern Tech would become a separate institution.

Throughout his administration, Van Leer consistently urged that Southern Tech remain under the Engineering Extension Division of Georgia Tech.¹ This afforded Southern Tech more freedom during its formative years, and Dean Howell had substantial experience with technical institute-type education through his role with the evening school. Van Leer also considered it administratively unsound for technical institute classes to be offered at Southern Tech, if it reported to the president or some other department within the Georgia Tech day school, as well as through the Evening School which was part of the Engineering Extension Division and not the regular day school.² This approach was maintained by the Regents, Georgia Tech administrators, and officials at Southern Tech until the 1970s, though it was periodically revisited.

A particularly appropriate time for possible separation arose in connection with the move to Cobb County (1958-61). During this period, while strong financial, industrial, and political support for the school was clearly present, the Georgia Tech administration approached Director McClure with the idea of separation. Had he agreed, Georgia Tech would have pushed for separation at that time, but after

¹Van Leer to Caldwell, 27 August 1952. GTA, PF, TI.

²In the 1940s, Georgia Tech's day school program and its Evening School were in two unrelated units. To have technical institute classes in both would violate the elimination of duplication so important to the State University System at the time. It would also require duplicate administrative handling in two different units of the school.

consulting with the faculty, McClure found a strong desire on their part to remain under the umbrella of Georgia Tech.³ Even in retrospect, it is hard to evaluate whether this was the best decision for Southern Tech. It clearly would have avoided the problems and confrontation which later enveloped the separation issue. But the 1960s were difficult years for American higher education. Many social and educational pressures arose which were beyond the control of faculty and administrators. Though muted in some ways, these difficulties also arose on the Southern Tech campus.⁴ Had separation occurred at the beginning of the decade of the 1960s, the school might have struggled with great difficulty for recognition of its needs by the Regents, when competing with other system schools, only to falter due to problems with recruitment and changes in technology education. However, as long as the strength of Georgia Tech's political influence supported the school, there was a better chance of prospering, primarily because Southern Tech remained a part of Georgia Tech and participated in its reputation and influence.

After Southern Tech became a four-year institution, the relationship with Georgia Tech was increasingly awkward. Southern Tech had become significantly larger, and was solely responsible for all technical institute training offered by Georgia Tech.⁵ Also, for more than two decades Southern Tech had largely handled its own affairs with relatively minimal interference from Georgia Tech officials. Reasons cited against separation in previous decades had evaporated. Creating an organizational structure for two distinct, largely separate institutions while retaining some inherent organizational relationship was a challenge imbedded with potential for conflict. However, even as late as 1975, many students and some faculty supported

³Interview with Hoyt L. McClure, 24 August, 1995. L. V. Johnson was head of the Engineering Extension Division by this time and such a move would probably have eliminated his oversight over the school. Given his consistent concern for Southern Tech and its success, one might expect that he would have been hesitant as well to see separation occur at the time.

⁴Such difficulties include, for example, racial harmony, attitudes to the Vietnam War, and campus unrest. With few exceptions, the confrontations on other campuses around the nation did not occur at Southern Tech. The issues were debated, however, and are frequently mentioned in school publications.

⁵During the 1971-1972 academic year, 19 new full-time faculty were added. 1971-1972 Annual Report. STA. At the time the school became a four-year institution, there was a history of difficulty between the Chancellor and the president of Georgia Tech. In retrospect, this time might have been the most appropriate time for independence. However, there were also budgetary and other constraints with which the University System was wrestling which would have made it difficult to have given Southern Tech independence from Georgia Tech even if both schools were seeking this, which they were not at the time. Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995.

maintaining a relationship between the two schools. Nevertheless, by then, the bond was developing serious cracks.

In 1970, just as Southern Tech was becoming a four-year institution, the national economy went into a tailspin, especially affecting the technological world, and was soon to experience wage and price controls imposed by the Nixon administration.⁶ Suddenly, only limited resources were available to the Regents with which to help Southern Tech in the transition to a four-year program. Faculty office space was already cramped and became more so with the addition of faculty to support the new degree program. Faculty salaries were so low that it was difficult to attract highly-qualified faculty or even to sustain the morale of those already employed by the school. Laboratory equipment was aging rapidly; buildings needed maintenance; and though one of the larger schools in the University System, the relationship with Georgia Tech involved an awkward budgeting process.⁷ Southern Tech administrators prepared the school's budget, then Georgia Tech officials adjusted it according to their priorities. It was then submitted to the Regents as part of Georgia Tech's overall budget, to compete with the other schools in the system for funding. To be sure, Southern Tech's basic budget was distinct from Georgia Tech's, and could not be used by Georgia Tech to supplement its own funds. However, some areas were not so clearly separated, especially in the auxiliary services (e.g., bookstore, security, dining hall, physical plant). Georgia Tech also prioritized building requests and had the final approval over changes in faculty status.⁸ When the Southern Tech budget was presented before the Regents, it was Georgia Tech administrators who had

⁶Occasioned by changes under the Nixon administration, especially in the space program and disengagement from Vietnam, the job market for engineers and scientists plunged during the period between 1969 and 1970. This was part of a nationwide recession and hit technology particularly hard, leading also to reduced recruitment of students. By 1972, some schools were either offering or developing courses for retraining engineers who had lost their jobs due to the decline in the space program and the government purchase of technology. For more on Southern Tech's response to this situation, see the previous chapter.

⁷1971-1972 Annual Report. STA. Though a unit of Georgia Tech, Southern Tech was one of the larger schools in its own right in the state University System.

⁸1973-1974 Annual Report. STA. At this time, the Mechanical Engineering Technology Department challenged promotion and tenure criteria which involved research and professional activities as being poorly related to the focus of Southern Tech's education.

the responsibility to "make the case" for Southern Tech.⁹

In the hands of a truly supportive Georgia Tech administration, such as that of the Van Leer and Harrison years, Southern Tech's transition into a four-year school might have been less problematic.¹⁰ But Georgia Tech was growing, and when Dr. Joseph M. Pettit assumed the presidency in 1972, the needs of the two schools seemingly far outstripped the resources available to meet the needs of either. For Southern Tech, any buildings approved required intense political lobbying outside the usual hierarchy of Georgia Tech or the University System. Despite almost tripling enrollment during the 1970s, Southern Tech would wait over 15 years before any additional academic buildings would be approved. By 1973, even the students were beginning to feel the stress. In early March, during a meeting students held with Hoyt McClure, Associate Dean of the school, concerning a student center, the issue of separation was also raised.¹¹ He responded that separation could cost as much as \$100,000, though this would be partially offset by savings for Georgia Tech in some areas. However, though Georgia Tech had no access to monies allotted to Southern Tech in its budget, it would probably mean a reduction in some areas of Georgia Tech's budget, and, therefore, it likely would mean a fight with Georgia Tech.¹²

The perception among Southern Tech faculty, students, and staff, which resulted from this meeting was that the school's needs were constantly being subordinated to those of Georgia Tech. As talk of separation began to spread, Dean Carlson spoke of four possible options: Southern Tech could remain related to Georgia Tech as at present; could become a full college of Georgia Tech reporting directly to Georgia Tech's president; could be fully absorbed by Georgia Tech, becoming essentially an extension campus with no separate identity whatsoever; or it could become independent.¹³ These would, from this point forward, become the working options for considering the relationship between the two schools. Dean

⁹*Ibid.* A new or expanded library facility, desperately needed by this time, is a case in point. It was determined that since Southern Tech was part of Georgia Tech and the libraries were linked, no new facility was authorized. Southern Tech students could simply use the resources of Georgia Tech. This was in spite of the fact that since 1972, functionally, the two libraries were completely independent of one another.

¹⁰Interview with Hoyt McClure, 24 August 1995.

¹¹MDJ, 3 March 1973. The student center issue is discussed in the previous chapter.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³MDJ, 25 March 1973. The second and third options were actually just variations of one another.

Carlson suggested that the school already enjoyed considerable autonomy, except for some auxiliary services, and that there were distinct advantages to the existing relationship, both in volume purchases and overall identification with the name and reputation of Georgia Tech.¹⁴ Indeed, all of the arguments both for and against separation seemingly had merit. But as the voices for separation grew stronger and louder, the Georgia Tech administration took steps which served to draw the two schools into a stronger interrelationship and ultimately proposed that Southern Tech be completely absorbed into Georgia Tech.¹⁵

When then-Governor Jimmy Carter visited Southern Tech, meeting with faculty and students, he concluded his visit by verbally supporting independence for the school.¹⁶ In what was to be a key element for achieving separation, Carter urged the students to be, or become, involved in the issue or separation might never occur.

During the closing years of the Vietnam War students were, on the whole, somewhat more mature and politically active and in response to Carter's urging, almost immediately a core group of students began a drive for separation.¹⁷ In September 1973, these students met with Dr. Pettit concerning the issue, at which time they secured his commitment to research the desirability of separation or a change in the administrative chain of command.¹⁸ This was followed up by a much larger meeting in January 1974, attended by over 400 students.¹⁹ Students grilled Dr. Pettit with a lengthy barrage of questions centered around student-perceived problems with the current Southern Tech administration and the school's continuing relationship with Georgia Tech. In particular, the meeting raised the issues of lower faculty salaries and the lack of any public relations staff for Southern Tech. Also raised was the problem of understanding, both among professional organizations and within Georgia's education agencies, over what the discipline of Engineering Technology was and how it was to be distinguished from Engineering, whether for professional certifications or in the general industrial world. Students came away from the meeting

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵As reflected below, this would be the recommendation of Pettit to the Chancellor's office in the fall of 1979.

¹⁶MDJ, 28 August 1973. On this incident, see the previous chapter.

¹⁷Interview with David Summers, 15 October 1996.

¹⁸Whatsizname, 24 September 1973. STA. This was the title of the school paper.

¹⁹Whatsizname, 18 January 1974. STA.

mostly discouraged, feeling Pettit reflected little interest in their concerns.²⁰

In the late spring, a straw poll was taken by the Southern Tech Student Government Association concerning the relationship between Southern Tech and Georgia Tech.²¹ More significant than the numbers, perhaps, was a note of caution reflected in the results. Changing the name and creating a more direct administrative channel might be desirable, but even those supporting a merger of the two schools were hesitant about any other possible ramifications of such a move (e.g., changing admission or graduation requirements, faculty credentials, etc.). When the Student Government Association President, Jeff Tucker, formally asked Dr. Pettit to make Dean Carlson head of a separate unit reporting directly to the president of Georgia Tech, the suggestion was rejected immediately as unworkable.²² Pettit, however, promised to review the long-range future of the two schools' relationship.²³

Subsequently, closer administrative ties began developing between the two schools, though a sense of estrangement still remained.²⁴ A branch of Georgia Tech's Continuing Education office was opened on the Southern Tech campus to offer practical short courses and creation of a Foundation for Southern Tech was linked to

²⁰Ibid. Professional certification was an important issue for the students. At the time, Georgia Tech was clearly favored in this regard: its students could take the Engineer-in-Training exam during the last quarter of their undergraduate study, while Southern Tech students (who were theoretically part of Georgia Tech at the time) had to wait five and one-half years following graduation. Whatsizname, 9 November 1973. STA.

²¹Whatsizname, 5 March 1974. STA. Over 38% of those participating voted for separation. This also showed that 62% supported a merger with Georgia Tech, primarily for the employment benefit this might provide. However, the response was statistically too small (about 250 respondents) and unscientific to be an accurate reflection of campus sentiment. Nevertheless, the fact that this poll was published in the campus newspaper accords it some influence in shaping the separation argument. In particular, the issues raised reflect those which later committees would also consider.

²²Whatsizname, 21 March 1974. STA.

²³Whatsizname, 3 April 1974. STA. It is interesting to compare Tucker's suggestion here to what Pettit would propose in 1979 regarding a merger of the two schools as the Georgia Tech response to the chorus demanding separation. To the extent that comparisons can be made from documentation, the concepts are almost identical.

²⁴For example, during 1974, Georgia Tech was conducting a search for a new dean for its College of Engineering, the person to whom Dean Carlson reported directly. However, only Georgia Tech faculty and students were part of the search committee. Southern Tech was completely omitted from the selection process. Whatsizname, 23 April 1974. STA.

the future relationship between the schools.²⁵ By November 1974, both Dr. Pettit and Dean Carlson openly advocated stronger ties between the schools as the future direction of the schools' relationship.²⁶ Student support for continuing the present relationship, along with faculty and alumni support for it, had seriously eroded, however. In another poll, only 50% of Southern Tech students participating remained supportive of any kind of continuing relationship with Georgia Tech; by March 1975, even this support would erode still further.²⁷

The Southern Tech faculty were not "quietly on the sidelines watching the fight" between Pettit and the students, though their situation was more awkward in that there was a serious fear of possible reprisals if they were too forward or forceful in seeking separation. In spring quarter 1975, an informal poll showed overwhelming faculty support for separation.²⁸ Clearly the faculty and administration of Southern Tech were moving in substantially opposite directions in their perceptions of Southern Tech's future. These difficulties surfaced vividly in a memo from Associate Dean McClure to the faculty during the 1975 Legislative Session, in which he enjoined them from making direct contact with state legislators or the press.²⁹ When faculty

²⁵If the two schools merged, no separate Foundation would be needed for Southern Tech. The more duplication of offices and services there were at Southern Tech, the more it prejudiced the relationship between the schools toward separation.

²⁶Whatsizname, 16 October 1974. STA. MDJ, 15 September 1974; MDJ, 28 November 1974. Curiously, Pettit asserted that if closer ties did not work, then the schools should separate. This would have created a certain basis for contention, as well as an administrative and organizational nightmare, if after carefully interweaving the affairs of the two schools into a more complex whole, it should then be decided to separate them.

²⁷MDJ, 28 November 1974. Whatsizname, 5 March 1975. STA.

²⁸R. W. Hays to Pettit, 20 May 1975. STA. Of 60 faculty responding, 49 urged separation, 7 urged closer ties, and just 4 were satisfied with the present situation. Over the next several years, this ratio would continue to be convincingly consistent. The response represented 60% of the faculty, hence a significant reflection of faculty sentiment.

²⁹Memo to Faculty and Staff, 26 February 1975. STA. The fear was that such contact might interfere with administration-initiated strategies of which the faculty might be unaware and/or were conceivably not willing to support. Many of the faculty considered this memo to be inconsistent with the management style of Dean McClure and believed it originated under pressure from the Georgia Tech administration in order to head off a possible political uprising at Southern Tech. Students had already been vocal for some time concerning the relationship; alumni had recently succeeded in having legislation passed dealing with the inequity in professional certification; and faculty were known to have numerous concerns as well. MDJ, 2 March 1975.

members challenged McClure, the memo was rescinded, but the damage had already been done.

Within two weeks, an Ad Hoc Committee was created by the faculty to study the problems Southern Tech faced and to examine the Southern Tech-Georgia Tech relationship.³⁰ Professor Robert Hays, an outspoken advocate for separation, was elected chairman of the committee. For almost 20 years, Professor Hays had chaired the English Department. He was a nationally known leader in the field of technical communication, had received numerous awards for his work, and had authored several books and many articles in his own field, as well as concerning the educational program at Southern Tech. In 1973, he had stepped down from his administrative role to devote more time to teaching, consulting, and writing. Quickly, the committee he now chaired drafted a list of problems which were thought to be caused by the awkward relationship between the two schools and arranged a meeting with Dr. Pettit's assistant. After the poll of the Southern Tech faculty during spring quarter 1975, another meeting was arranged, this time between the committee and Dr. Pettit. At this meeting, there was extensive "give and take" over the points raised, and Pettit entertained the possible need to revise the organizational structure of the two schools.³¹

During the meeting with Pettit and in subsequent contacts, it was decided that the faculty should prepare a "Critical Issues" document to facilitate discussion.³² The issues identified in this document included authority and responsibility, administrative procedures, and operations related to academics (e.g., food services, bookstore, Physical Plant, Business Office, etc.).³³ The presentation of this document to Dr. Pettit did not go well. The strain of contention, differences of opinion and perspective, as well as personalities competed with the document for consideration.³⁴

³⁰Minutes of a Meeting, 4 March 1975. STA.

³¹Minutes of a Meeting, 16 July 1975. STA. Dean Carlson had been excluded from this committee's meetings, and Pettit insisted Carlson be present at all such future meetings, which was not well-received by the committee. This insistence served to further estrange the committee and Dr. Pettit.

³²Memo to Faculty from R. W. Hays, 22 July 1975; Minutes of a Meeting, 5 August 1975. STA.

³³"Critical Questions and Comments," 19 September 1975. STA. The whole document was 70 pages in length.

³⁴Minutes of a Meeting, 16 October 1975. STA. Dr. Pettit's and Professor Hays' approach to problems at Southern Tech, and to administration, were quite different.

However, while a legislative committee was visiting the Southern Tech campus a few days later, Pettit informed the Ad Hoc Committee that though coordination and reporting probably did need clarification, the committee should use their 70 page document as the basis for contacting appropriate administrative officials to address the items enumerated in the document.³⁵ He would then meet with them to deal with the remainder of the issues.

The state senators who toured Southern Tech were hosted by Carlson and Pettit.³⁶ During many such legislative visits, it was often agreed among the legislators that Southern Tech did not get as much credit as it should from the state in general nor from the Board of Regents in particular.³⁷ The lack of recognition by the Regents was traceable to the Georgia Tech administration since it was Georgia Tech that bore primary responsibility for promoting Southern Tech's interests before the Board of Regents. Secondly, the problem was also inherent in the nature of the Georgia Tech-Southern Tech relationship, which distanced Southern Tech from direct official contact with the Regents. Also of continued concern were issues of faculty salary, library needs, and physical facilities (both renovation and new construction).

Pettit's letter concerning the "Critical Issues" document led to some disarray on the part of Southern Tech's faculty. Some felt the letter was conciliatory while others raised the possibility of unionizing the faculty or circulating a petition calling for separation.³⁸ Pettit subsequently made his assistant, Dr. Fuller, available to the Southern Tech campus and began to formulate a reorganization of the administrative structure and organizational relationship between the two schools.³⁹ Discussions held by Fuller indicated widespread inadequacies, especially in leadership and organization, but also in communication and allocation of financial resources. Pettit responded by reorganizing the schools' administrative relationship. The goal was to strengthen the seemingly beneficial aspects of the relationship while deferring the separation issue

³⁵Pettit to Ad Hoc Committee, 23 October 1975. STA.

³⁶MDJ, 23 October 1975.

³⁷AJ, Cobb Edition, 3 November 1976. It is interesting to note that the comments in this article are made nine months after Pettit reorganized the relational structure between the two schools, supposedly to correct just such problems.

³⁸Unofficial Minutes of a Faculty Meeting, 28 October 1975. STA.

³⁹Memo, Pettit to Ad Hoc Committee, 31 October 1975. STA. Some faculty saw this merely as a "sop to mollify the discontented" rather than as a serious attempt to deal with the issues the faculty was raising.

and not to make the schools rivals .⁴⁰ Since to a substantial degree, Southern Tech already was operationally independent, Pettit attempted even further to separate the operations of the two schools. However, business, finance, and physical plant at Southern Tech remained closely tied with Georgia Tech. Dean Carlson was made Dean of the Georgia Tech College of Technology and Executive Director of the Marietta Campus. As such, he reported to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Georgia Tech, thereby removing one level of bureaucracy from the organizational structure. Curricular issues, performance reviews, and other academic and faculty-related matters were also reviewed and changes made. Initial implementation was made effective on January 30, 1976, but some aspects of the reorganization took many months before they were completely in place. In spite of any potentially new autonomy for Southern Tech which these structural changes may have offered, Carlson's approach was to implement the changes but to keep all functional units of Southern Tech in close cooperation with their counterparts at Georgia Tech. Hoyt McClure was made Associate Executive Director. It was his job to oversee these units and their relationship to Georgia Tech.⁴¹

One of the important funding issues at Southern Tech concerned creation of a Foundation. Many schools maintain a Foundation as a source of financial assistance, political support, and business and industrial contacts. This is especially important during periods of decline in state and federal support for public institutions as well as when the school has a financial shortfall; needs to upgrade laboratories for which it lacks sufficient allocations; wants to fund certain types of construction projects; or desires to honor faculty, staff, students, and friends of the school. Foundation funds can come from gifts by alumni, or friends of the school, or from bequests and grants but most often come from corporate business and industrial gifts. Through 1975, as well respected in industry as Southern Tech was, it had received few gifts from corporations. Yet when its students and alumni inquired of their employers concerning corporate and matching gifts, they were told that money had

⁴⁰Pettit to All at Southern Tech, 30 January 1976. STA. At first glance, rivalry seems an awkward concept. But in the 1970s and early 1980s, many of Georgia Tech's graduates were being hired into positions which required more applications background and less research. Thus, at that time, Southern Tech graduates were rivaling Georgia Tech graduates in the job market, sometimes even besting the latter. This competition was a serious issue and probably played a role in the Pettit administration's approach to Southern Tech interests as well as Georgia Tech interests.

⁴¹Carlson to Pettit, 5 April 1976. McClure's return to the faculty on 1 January 1978, introduced problems for Carlson. McClure had been on the faculty about as long as had Hays. But the new leadership after 1977 lacked the background and relationships with the faculty and staff to effectively maintain what was a very difficult organizational pattern. It is therefore not surprising that the whole issue of separation resurfaced in 1978 with a greater intensity than before.

been given to Southern Tech through the Georgia Tech Education Foundation. The perception was of a substantial sum of money given through Georgia Tech and intended for Southern Tech, but never received by the latter school for its own use, thereby calling Georgia Tech's integrity vis-a-vis donations intended for Southern Tech into question. There was, in fact, considerable resistance by both the Regents, Georgia Tech, and some alumni to creating a separate Southern Tech Foundation, which deepened the suspicions of some that there had been wrongdoing in the Georgia Tech Foundation. However, with the backing of several influential alumni a separate Foundation was established in 1976 under the leadership of one of the school's early graduates, L. Glenn Dewberry, by this time President of Atlantic Steel Company.⁴²

During 1977, the administrative situation at Southern Tech began to unravel. In May, Professor Hays proposed that the Ad Hoc Committee query faculty and staff relative to raises, the recently completed administrative review, Southern Tech operations, and other matters of concern.⁴³ It had been a year since most of the administrative changes had been implemented, but many of the long-standing issues appeared to have been inadequately addressed by the new administrative structure. Georgia Tech's approval was still required for all curriculum changes, financial matters, personnel changes, building renovations and improvements, and even in most auxiliary services (food, dormitories, etc.). In addition, there was strong evidence that the Pettit administration neither promoted nor protected Southern Tech interests. When Savannah State College initiated Engineering Technology programs, Georgia Tech seemed to offer no serious challenge to the move. Nor was there any apparent challenge to Georgia Southern's development of a new Master of Technology program.⁴⁴ Both programs were properly areas of substantial concern for Southern Tech, yet the school had little access to the Regents when non-budgetary matters were concerned, except via Georgia Tech. It was as if a rivalry between the two schools already existed (rather than waiting for separation), and keeping Southern Tech under its control was the easiest way for Georgia Tech to promote its own interests.⁴⁵

⁴²AJ, 5 November 1976. AC, 29 October 1976.

⁴³Minutes of a Meeting, 16 May 1977. STA.

⁴⁴L. V. Johnson to Carlson, 7 December 1971. GTA, Presidential File 13. Pope Duncan (President, Georgia Southern) to Pettit, Jackson (President, Savannah State), 29 November 1976. GTA, Presidential File 12.

⁴⁵STING, 23 January 1978. STA. Neither of the programs at Savannah State nor at Georgia Southern represented much of a challenge to Georgia Tech. On the other hand, except for her top graduates, the research emphasis at Georgia Tech meant her other graduates experienced considerable

While not the only source of conflict, budgets were the heart of much of the difficulty between the schools.⁴⁶ Both schools primarily offered technology- and science-related curricula and to some extent endeavored to recruit from the same pool of prospective students. The rivalry between them had budgetary implications because of the effect on enrollment, which drives both curriculum and personnel decisions, along with state allocations. Additionally, the 1970s were financially difficult for government, industry and personal financial planning. The Arab Oil Embargo of 1973-74 set in motion an inflationary spiral that by 1978 was approaching, and in some sectors already had entered, double digits. The result was to strain the resources of the state of Georgia and increase competition between schools in the University System. The nature of Southern Tech's organizational structure, meant an even more difficult financial situation for the school. In May 1977, Dean Carlson assessed the situation: significant building repairs were needed; faculty salaries were too low to attract qualified faculty; there were higher-than-expected bills (especially for utilities); crucial vacancies existed in administrative personnel; and the whole issue of the school's visibility needed attention.⁴⁷ Then in December 1977, it was discovered that \$56,000 of the 1976-77 academic year budget had been returned to the state.⁴⁸ While the explanation for this action partially involved certain legal constraints, it also raised the question of weak leadership by the administration and began the destruction of any possible trust by the school of the new administrative structure.⁴⁹ In the ensuing months, Hoyt McClure resigned as Associate Executive Director and returned to the Industrial Engineering Technology faculty after almost 20 years of leadership at Southern Tech.⁵⁰ A wave of department head changes occurred, and with the ensuing

competition from Southern Tech graduates for the same jobs.

⁴⁶The other principal issue was career policies for faculty. The applied orientation at Southern Tech implied different qualifications were needed for faculty at the two schools. This resulted in conflict over faculty qualifications, perceived salary inequities, criteria for promotion and tenure, etc.

⁴⁷STING, 2 May 1977. STA.

⁴⁸STING, 26 September 1977. STA.

⁴⁹STING, 31 October 1977. STA. The money had not been allocated for salaries and operational expenses, and therefore could not be used to address the needs Carlson outlined.

⁵⁰STING, 7 November 1977. STA. A writer to the school paper predicted that with McClure gone, Police Services, Maintenance, and Operations would all experience major difficulties. These are, in fact, the areas which became critical in the separation issue. "Letters," STING, 21 November 1977. STA.

reorganization, some actions and decisions served to intensify the lack of trust rather than assuage it. Significant among these actions was the creation of a Development Office to oversee many of the school's contacts with the community. In November 1977, Pettit and the Regents, acting on Carlson's recommendation, approved the creation of this office at Southern Tech by combining several former offices into this single unit. They also appointed Paul Smith, the former head of Placement, to direct the new department.⁵¹ This restructuring was done in almost total secrecy and apparently in violation of the usual procedure, which involved the use of a search committee.⁵²

Creation of the Development Office had serious consequences. Robert Azar, former Director of Public Relations, Executive Secretary of the Alumni Association, and Treasurer of the Southern Tech Foundation, now reported to the Director of Development, though his responsibilities were basically unchanged. Many in the Southern Tech community, including alumni, felt Azar had more experience for the Director's position than did Smith. Azar was also popular with both students and alumni, but a serious personality conflict existed between Azar and Smith.⁵³ Students and alumni were incensed over the situation. In addition, the arrangement created a particularly difficult administrative problem. Smith, as Director of Development, was Azar's supervisor for his public relations responsibilities. However, Smith had neither legal nor administrative authority over Mr. Azar in the latter's dealings with alumni.⁵⁴ The lack of trust between the alumni and the administration over the separation issue was intensified by the situation with Mr. Azar, and the alumni now began to campaign actively for separation. Students were angered because Azar had been a primary source of communications about events on campus which affected them, especially when the administration was not otherwise communicating these things to the students. Azar was also a strong supporter of the Bathtub Race and other student activities,

⁵¹Minutes of the Board of Regents Meeting, 9 November 1977. STA.

⁵²STING, 14 November 1977; STING, 9 January 1978. STA.

⁵³STING, "Letters," 14 November 1977. STA. Opinions expressed concerning Mr. Smith varied, but there was little middle ground. Whether this was because of his estrangement to Mr. Azar is less clear and may be more a matter of personal opinion.

⁵⁴STING, "Letters," 21 November 1977. STA. Because of the charters of these two organizations, which gave them quasi-official status with the school, Smith had no official role. Azar's responsibilities were based on his official position in each. Hence, Smith could submit requests but had no authority to give orders or issue demands to these organizations or their officers, including Azar.

particularly when they enhanced the visibility of the school.⁵⁵ For the faculty, still upset over the surrender to the state of allocated funds, the whole affair came as a surprise, a new operational department on campus about which there had been neither prior discussion nor even rumors. During the Carlson years, department chairs met regularly with the Dean and had considerable influence in campus affairs, as well as an overall awareness of what was happening on campus. Hence, the creation of a new department without their knowledge became a matter of great frustration. Ultimately, alumni, faculty, and students found reason to consider Dr. Pettit the true author of this particular action.⁵⁶

To further exacerbate suspicions, the issue of accountability by the Georgia Tech Educational Foundation for possible gifts intended by the donors for Southern Tech expanded to also include concerns relating to dormitory deposits. These deposits drew interest, and with the financial affairs of the two schools so closely linked, the question arose as to where interest income from dormitory deposits for Southern Tech was being credited.⁵⁷ However, the trust issue also extended beyond the Georgia Tech - Southern Tech relationship. In December 1977, the Student Advisory Council, meeting with the Board of Regents and the Chancellor's Office, turned into a serious exchange between the president of the Student Government Association at Southern Tech, Tom Samford, and the Chancellor.⁵⁸ When the Council asked the Regents to look into the Georgia Tech - Southern Tech relationship, Chancellor Simpson responded that he and Pettit had already done so and made administrative changes accordingly. Vice-Chancellor Hooper specified the details of these changes but then added fuel to the developing conflict by noting that the Chancellor's office had yet

⁵⁵STING, 16 January 1978. STA.

⁵⁶STING, 16 January 1978. STA.

⁵⁷STING, 30 January 1978. STA. Adding to this suspicion was the realization that in the two years since the Southern Tech Foundation was established, it had experienced substantial success in fund-raising, far exceeding the donations of the previous 28 years. This success suggested Georgia Tech had prospered at the expense of Southern Tech and there could be other situations worth investigating as well.

⁵⁸The Council had been created by the Regents as a channel for students to make their concerns known to the State University System. Members of the Council included student leaders (usually the elected president of the student body) from each school.

to determine where Engineering Technology should fit in the educational system.⁵⁹ As a result of this meeting it became clear to Southern Tech's student leaders that the Board of Regents relied heavily on the Chancellor's office for input and the struggle for separation would involve that office, not just the Georgia Tech administration. It was also evident that some Regents were sympathetic toward Southern Tech's interest.

During winter quarter 1978, the movement for separation re-ignited. In January, Professor Hays announced to a general faculty meeting his intention to introduce, at a later meeting, a resolution calling for separation.⁶⁰ Instead, the following month, the faculty passed a resolution calling for a Regents' Study Committee to investigate the relationship between Georgia Tech and Southern Tech.⁶¹ This resolution was passed by an overwhelming margin (58 to 12) and was sent via Carlson to Pettit and then to the Chancellor.⁶² Also in March, a Student Council Resolution was passed by the student body of Southern Tech asking the Regents to investigate the Georgia Tech - Southern Tech relationship and to include representatives from Southern Tech as part of the investigating team.⁶³ This petition, along with the faculty petition, was presented by Samford to the Regents at their April meeting. Though several Regents supported the petitions for such a study committee, the Chancellor indicated that federal guidelines on segregation were taking precedence in his office; for him, the Southern Tech matter was, and should remain, under study. However, when pressed, the Chancellor admitted to having studied the separation

⁵⁹STING, 20 February 1978. STA. There is more to this story than at first seems evident. Although for 30 years Southern Tech had been struggling to make its role in the educational system known, not only did it seem less than truly successful with the public, but now even its own agency responsible for support and guidance was still unsure about the school. In addition, the ECPD, the accrediting agency for Engineering and Engineering Technology, was at this time engaged in a year-long study regarding possible restructuring of the accrediting process. See, A. J. Gully, "The Engineering Spectrum - Definitions, Identities, and Roles." A paper presented at the ECPD Meeting in Atlanta, 16 January 1978.

⁶⁰Minutes of a Meeting, 10 January 1978. STA.

⁶¹Minutes of a Meeting, 28 February 1978. STA. Carlson to Pettit, 28 February 1978. President's Office, Southern Polytechnic State University.

⁶²Carlson to Pettit, 28 February 1978; Pettit to Simpson, 5 March 1978. STA. The faculty wanted representatives to the committee to be elected but Carlson advised Pettit that it would not likely result in an objective, balanced evaluation that way. When the committee was created, all the members were appointed.

⁶³"Focus," MDJ, 26 March 1978. STING, 3 April 1978. STA.

issue for ten years!⁶⁴ No action was taken at this meeting, at least in part because of Southern Tech's successful record, which made the Regents hesitant to make changes: enrollment was up 7% for the winter quarter, compared to a system-wide increase of .1%.⁶⁵

Prior to the Regents' May meeting, Southern Tech alumni also were weighing in on the side of separation. At a special meeting on May 4, 1978, following the annual Bathtub Race, the Board of Directors of the National Alumni Association unanimously voted that "STI separate from the GIT in a most expeditious manner."⁶⁶ A "white paper" in favor of separation was quickly circulated, enumerating a variety of campus concerns.⁶⁷ The combined impact of student, faculty, and alumni initiatives, doubtless also with some personal, informal contacts, resulted in Board action during the May meeting, directing the Chancellor to establish a Study Committee concerning the Georgia Tech - Southern Tech relationship. The details of committee composition and character, however, were left within Simpson's purview.⁶⁸ When the Chancellor still seemed to equivocate, a panel composed of students, alumni, and Cobb legislators Joe Mack Wilson and Johnny Isakson met with Governor George Busbee in late June. The governor promised to study the issue as well. Shortly thereafter, the Chancellor finally appointed the committee. Though it included members from both schools in equal numbers, students and alumni were given no voting power and had already been informed that they might be excluded from some

⁶⁴STING, 1 May 1978. STA. Regent Plunkett, who employed Southern Tech graduates, urged that the matter be assigned to the Education Committee. Regent Friedman, Vice-Chair, 1978-79, also spoke somewhat favorably. Regent Oxford, Chair, had helped get the matter before the Board at this meeting. On the other hand, the segregation issue was now over 20 years old. The immediate problem the Chancellor faced over this issue was federal (HEW) rejection of Georgia's desegregation plan. His office was being pressured on the issue, though this was not a recent development either.

⁶⁵System Summary, Vol 14, No 2, February 1978. STA.

⁶⁶Alumni Times (STI), July 1978. STA.

⁶⁷STING, 22 May 1978. STA. The paper is undated but was published prior to the May Regents' meeting, as it is referenced in the 8 May issue of the STING. Among the problems noted in the paper are laboratory temperatures during the summer which were above 100°; need for space, yet no construction funds for Southern Tech were even requested in the budget which Georgia Tech submitted to the Regents; and assertion of certain administrative limitations.

⁶⁸STING, 15 May 1978. STA.

meetings.⁶⁹

Over the next several months, this committee met a number of times, reviewing various aspects of the two schools and their relationship. Among the things considered were the present administrative relationship, Southern Tech's history, profiles of Southern Tech students, placement, the industry viewpoint, funding, and business operations.⁷⁰ Comments from Southern Tech faculty and staff were solicited by the committee.⁷¹ Included within the comments they received was one reflecting a feeling of "colonial status" at Southern Tech. Other concerns were the different focus of each school (applied vs. research), negative or patronizing attitudes toward Southern Tech which some experienced when dealing with Georgia Tech, and poorly defined lines of responsibility. Dean Carlson was also included within the concerns expressed. He was an engineer, scholar, and academician who had served as the acting-Chair of the College of Engineering at Georgia Tech before his appointment to Southern Tech. There were substantial differences, however, between leading a department of a college and an entire institution, which involves understanding and embracing the institutions ideal's and people as well as overseeing physical plant, auxiliary services, and multiple departments.⁷² Whatever the cause of the perceived administrative or other problems, as Dean the responsibility was Carlson's.

In October 1978, Southern Tech's Business Manager, J. R. Robertson, prepared a cost estimate, assuming separation were to take place, for the second Study Committee meeting.⁷³ His figures indicated a one-time cost of approximately \$100,000, and recurring costs of \$25,000 per year.⁷⁴ The committee continued to meet through February 1979, but reached no conclusions about the Georgia Tech -

⁶⁹Ibid., Memo: Hays to Faculty and Staff, 15 May 1978. STA. The committee was officially constituted on 13 July 1978.

⁷⁰STING, 2 October 1978; STING, 16 October 1978. STA.

⁷¹Memo: Hooper (Vice-Chancellor) to "All at STI", 11 October 1978. STA.

⁷²A. J. Hunkin to Hooper, 18 October 1978; Hays to Hooper, 21 October 1978. STA.

⁷³Memo: Robertson to Carlson, 5 October 1978. STA. His position was newly created, as well, after McClure's departure from the administration at the beginning of the year.

⁷⁴There were also hidden and/or indeterminate costs such as short-term student loans, matching-fund financial aid programs (e.g., the National Defense Student Loan (NDSL), now the Stafford Loan program), off-campus-program faculty salaries, and changes in various auxiliary services (e.g., food service).

Southern Tech relationship. Then in March, Dr. Pettit met with students, faculty, and staff at Southern Tech in an open dialogue which ranged over the by-then fairly predictable issues and complaints regarding the relationship between the two schools. When asked directly if the committee recommended separation, would he support it, Pettit refused to answer the question, urging the schools to find the means to cooperate rather than to become rivals.⁷⁵ In April, a status report on the committee's work was issued by the Chancellor's office. It indicated three possible options had emerged and were being studied: remaining as at present (status quo option); separation; and complete absorption. Rather than developing a composite final recommendation, the committee decided simply to compile for the Chancellor's office a list of the advantages and disadvantages of each option, which could then be passed to the Regents with or without comment.⁷⁶

Also in April, the Regents accepted an invitation to hold their May meeting on the Southern Tech campus.⁷⁷ At this meeting, Sam White, speaking for the alumni as President of the Alumni Association, and Barbara Ransom, speaking for the students as President of the student body, presented to the Regents the case for separation.⁷⁸ That same week Bill Kinney, editor of the Marietta Daily Journal and one of those who had been instrumental in bringing Southern Tech to Cobb County, endorsed the separation of the two schools on behalf of the community.⁷⁹ At the meeting there was no commitment from the Regents, but within three weeks, in a surprise action, both the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor had resigned due to continued problems relating to the state's desegregation plan. Clearly, the future of separation was simply left hanging for the moment.⁸⁰

⁷⁵STING, 5 March 1979. STA.

⁷⁶Memo: Hooper to "All at STI," 27 April 1979. STA.

⁷⁷STING, 16 April 1979. STA. This was reportedly the first time ever the Regents met on the Southern Tech campus.

⁷⁸STING, 7 May 1979. STA.

⁷⁹MDJ, 8 May 1979. Kinney uses the comparison of Kennesaw Junior College being cut from UGA, whose extension campus in Marietta was the core out of which KJC, now Kennesaw State University, was formed.

⁸⁰AJ, 10 May 1979. Simpson was blamed for the continued problems in getting HEW to accept the state's desegregation plan. In May, there were already enough votes on the Board to dismiss Simpson if he had chosen not to resign.

With the departure of Chancellor Simpson in early summer, Dr. Vernon Crawford was appointed acting-Chancellor. Dr. Crawford had for some years been the Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Georgia Tech, and his appointment was not greeted with enthusiasm by many at Southern Tech. However, Crawford had a son at Southern Tech, and during fall quarter 1979, when the issue of separation was finally decided, he was perhaps more directly aware of the character and program of Southern Tech than anyone else at Georgia Tech or in the Chancellor's office. During the summer, however, the issue of separation more or less languished. Before leaving the Chancellor's office to return to Georgia Tech, Vice-Chancellor Hooper informed the Study Committee that not only would there be no composite report, but there would not even be a composite summary of the advantages and disadvantages relating to each option which the committee had identified. Instead, he would pass all pertinent materials to the acting-Chancellor. Each committee member was asked also to provide, in writing, a judgment as to the merits of each option.⁸¹

During this process, Georgia Tech took a further step which "muddied the water" by announcing that through a videotape system, starting with the fall quarter 1979, graduate-level instruction would be offered at Southern Tech through Georgia Tech's central video learning facility.⁸² The courses would be offered in a number of engineering disciplines and would require direct registration with Georgia Tech or its Continuing Education unit. Students would obtain from the Southern Tech library all videotapes of actual classroom lectures, do the same homework, take the same exams, and start and finish the class as if on the Georgia Tech campus. Clearly, this was an example to all - Regents, Southern Tech faculty, students, staff, alumni, and the Cobb community - of what could be done if absorption or a continued relationship between the two schools remained, rather than separating them.

In order for absorption to be meaningful, however, more than just a single program had to be developed. As fall quarter 1979 began, Crawford asked Pettit to detail a formal description of what the absorption option would look like.⁸³ Pettit's response was to describe a multi-campus university in which the Marietta campus would still be mostly independent, except for some name changes.⁸⁴ While he

⁸¹Hooper to Committee, 4 June 1979. STA.

⁸²STING, 30 July 1979. STA.

⁸³Crawford to Pettit, 19 September 1979. STA.

⁸⁴Pettit to Crawford, 4 October 1979; STING, 15 October 1979. STA. Specifically, there would be a college of Engineering Technology created, and at the Marietta campus there would be a Dean and an Executive Director. Virtually everything else would remain the same except that the name

emphasized his response was only a working paper, what he had presented was scarcely different from the status quo option. At the same time, there was general agreement that the status quo option was an unacceptable approach to the relationship between the two schools. If there had ever been a chance to argue forcefully for absorption or even the status quo option, this was it; but no substantial argument was forthcoming.

With the issue of separation not expected to come before the Board of Regents until November, the drive for separation intensified on the Southern Tech campus.⁸⁵ The Southern Tech Student Government Association published a resolution the day before the Regents' October meeting. It expressed "full support of all efforts to complete the separation of Southern Tech from Georgia Tech" and requested students to add their signatures to the petition.⁸⁶ It was hoped that this petition could then be presented to the Chancellor's office and the Regents, possibly while they were meeting. To bring further pressure, on October 9, 1979, the Cobb County Board of Commissioners also published a proclamation calling for separation.⁸⁷ The faculty at Southern Tech presented a petition to Carlson calling for a general faculty meeting on October 9, for the purpose of holding a secret ballot on the separation issue.⁸⁸ Since the Regents would be meeting at the time, this would enable what was expected to be an overwhelming vote in favor of separation to be communicated to them while in session. The meeting, however, was delayed and the strategy was never carried out.

On October 17, Crawford and Pettit met with the Southern Tech faculty.⁸⁹ Crawford explained that he had made no final decision on the issue and that a secret faculty ballot on the issue would be but one factor. However, he did expect that there would be a decision at the Regents' meeting in November. Pettit explained to the

"Southern Technical Institute" would disappear, and everything (auxiliary services, faculty personnel actions, etc.) would be directly controlled by Georgia Tech.

⁸⁵STING, 8 October 1979. STA.

⁸⁶STING, 8 October 1979. STA.

⁸⁷Proclamation by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners, 9 October 1979. STA.

⁸⁸Memo: Carlson to Members of the General Faculty, 3 October 1979. STA. Sixteen members of the faculty (which numbered over 100) had signed the petition. Carlson hesitated to call the meeting, however, as Crawford requested the faculty delay their vote (he had just received the absorption plan from Pettit). After some negotiation, the meeting and vote was held, but the following week.

⁸⁹"Letter" from Bob Hays to STI Faculty, STING, 22 October 1979. STA.

faculty that his plan was hastily put together. There had never actually been a plan for absorption, so he had to draft one very hurriedly. He also emphasized that if separation did occur, he would then consider Southern Tech fair competition with other schools in the University System for funding and other matters. Following their comments, the faculty discussed the issues at length. There were uncertainties, both for individuals and for the school, no matter what decision might ensue. Since the future is never guaranteed, the question really was "what would likely best position for the school for the future and for its traditional role of serving industry?" It seemed that the only serious argument for absorption was the prestige which Georgia Tech imputed to Southern Tech.⁹⁰ The secret ballot was taken, witnessed by Sam White for the Alumni Association. Of 104 possible votes, 95 expressed a position; of these, 67 voted in favor of separation.⁹¹

Though no action regarding separation took place at the Regents' October meeting, in spite of the presentations made to the Regents, it was clear to all that very soon a decision dramatically changing the administrative structure and future direction for Southern Tech would soon be made. With the separation issue having rapidly moved beyond his control and the outcome of the faculty poll almost certain, Carlson decided to announce his resignation to the faculty before their meeting and poll. He was a loyal Georgia Tech faculty member and had steadfastly supported maintaining the relationship between the two schools in some fashion. Whatever the ensuing decision might be, it was clear that he and the Southern Tech faculty had divergent views about the future of the school. Therefore, before any final decision was rendered, it was an expedient time to plan for the termination of his leadership, and allow someone else to guide the school on whatever course the future might take it. His resignation was to be effective on June 30, 1980, or at such other time determined by the Board of Regents which would allow for an orderly transition.⁹²

With a decision on separation expected at the November Regents' meeting, preparations were made to deal with questions the Regents might raise and to demonstrate the overwhelming agreement of students, faculty, and alumni at Southern Tech over separation. One possible concern if separation was recommended was the impact on accreditation, but since SACS had accredited Southern Tech some years earlier as a special purpose institution, quite apart from Georgia Tech, this proved to

⁹⁰AJC, 14 November 1979.

⁹¹Memo: Crawford to STI Faculty, 23 October 1979. STA. MDI, 30 October 1979. Eight did not vote and one abstained. Eight voted for the status quo option and 20 for absorption. By this time, the vote was being requested by Crawford.

⁹²STING, 15 October 1979. STA. AC, Cobb Extra, 11 October 1979.

be a non-issue. Also, the ECPD only accredited programs, not schools; and with no changes to programs or degree designations, there was no issue there either.⁹³ Crawford, meanwhile, prepared a voluminous document for the Regents in which he summarized the arguments for each option. He noted the recommendation of the members of the Study Committee, which were inconclusive but narrowly favored absorption, and identified some concomitant issues.⁹⁴ His recommendation, however, was for separation.⁹⁵ Based on Pettit's plan for absorption, this was the only real option to the already dismissed maintenance of the status quo. Crawford assumed a budget of \$300,000 would be needed to separate the schools. He suggested a presidential search begin almost immediately, with the process to be completed by July 1980. Under this plan, a separation committee would be formed and the fiscal year 1982 budget prepared with separation to become effective on July 1, 1981.⁹⁶

A final decision was not reached at the November meeting, as the Regents asked Crawford for more details. It was, however, placed at the top of the agenda for the December meeting.⁹⁷ The addendum to the November report, which Crawford prepared for the December meeting, spelled out the separation process in more detail and surprisingly arrived at a dollar figure closer to what Robertson had determined a year earlier (\$100,000). There were sufficient contingency funds available to handle the "one time" costs of separation, and the continuing costs for the first year could also be absorbed into the current year's budget. What this meant was that full separation of the two schools could be accomplished during the current fiscal year, and Crawford recommended that it be final on July 1, 1980.⁹⁸ The Regents Committee on Education also recommended to the Board at its December meeting that separation be approved, which the entire board endorsed. The effective date was set for July 1, 1981, or sooner, with the presidential search committee charged to begin

⁹³STING, 22 October 1979. STA. The point was specifically addressed to reassure the campus community that whatever decision was forthcoming, it would not affect the school's accreditation.

⁹⁴Of the 13 members of the committee, six favored closer affiliation, four favored separation, two suggested advantages and disadvantages only and made no recommendation, and one was overseas and did not respond.

⁹⁵"The Relationship Between STI and GIT," 13 November 1979. STA.

⁹⁶*Ibid.* The fiscal year 1981 budget had already been prepared.

⁹⁷STING, 19 November 1979. STA.

⁹⁸"The Relationship Between STI and GIT: An Addendum," 12 December 1979. STA.

its work immediately. Authorization was also given for funding of committee and budget needs required to accomplish separation.⁹⁹

The decision to separate Southern Tech from Georgia Tech was greeted with enthusiasm on the Southern Tech campus. There was also much work to be done, especially to enable separation to be finalized by July 1, 1980, which was authorized if sufficient progress toward separation was made. Within days of the Regents' action, Crawford visited the Southern Tech campus to start the search process for the school's first president and to create a reorganization committee.¹⁰⁰ Of the 100 applicants who eventually applied for the position of the school's president, the search committee had to choose three, which they would refer to the Chancellor and Regents, unranked, for the final decision.¹⁰¹ Dr. Stephen R. Cheshier, Chair of the Electrical Engineering and Technology Department at Purdue University since 1976, was subsequently chosen to be the school's first president.¹⁰² The target date for the process was July 1, 1980, and the presidential choice was only missed by a few days.¹⁰³ Cheshier assumed his duties on September 1, 1980, while Dr. Carlson continued to serve the school, as interim president until that date.

There was also time to celebrate the separation with a formal ceremony, which took place on February 15, 1980.¹⁰⁴ The high point of the occasion was the awarding of three plaques in the form of the letters "S", "T", "I." These were made from the phrase, formerly on the school's sign, which read "A Division of Georgia Tech." In accepting the plaques, Professor Hays and L. V. Johnson represented the school; Sam White and Reuben Estes (past and current presidents of the Alumni Association) represented the Alumni; and Mike Renfroe (Student Government Association President) represented the students.¹⁰⁵ On June 11, 1980, the final Regents' action pertaining to separation took place when the Regents approved the

⁹⁹Minutes of the Board of Regents Meeting, 11-12 December 1979. STA.

¹⁰⁰Memo: Carlson to "All Faculty and Administrators," 13 December 1979. STA.

¹⁰¹STING, 4 February 1980; STING, 7 April 1980. STA. MDJ, 15 May 1980.

¹⁰²Memo: Crawford to Faculty, Staff, Students at STI, 9 July 1980. STA. MDJ, 9 July 1980; AJ, 10 July 1980.

¹⁰³STING, 21 July 1980. STA.

¹⁰⁴Program for Independence Day Celebration, 15 February 1980. STA.

¹⁰⁵STING, 25 February 1980. STA.

effective date as July 1, 1980. By this time, the presidential search was nearing completion, and most of the administrative arrangements had been worked through.¹⁰⁶

The issue of separation, in its final stages, was almost anti-climactic. Pettit's description of the possible future relationship based on absorption clearly hurt Georgia Tech's case, if indeed there remained by then any true desire to even retain a linkage between the two schools. Emotions were running high, and there was a marked polarity between the faculty and senior administration at Southern Tech over the issue. It was easy in the "heat of battle" to blame Georgia Tech for many things and to suppose that separation, while not a panacea, would propel the school into the next decade.¹⁰⁷ As will become apparent in the following chapter, on the surface at least, separation did seemingly infuse new life into the school. However, deeply rooted problems can be too easily "swept under the carpet" of excitement. Unless these have been identified and addressed, when circumstances change for the worse, when the excitement dies, and when institutional life again includes budget struggles, enrollment problems, and administrative difficulties, the same problems may reappear.

Lost in the three years of final, intense struggle for independence was the possibility that a continued relationship with Georgia Tech, perhaps under difficult circumstances, might have been transformed into something beneficial for both schools. More than just Georgia Tech's name, there was political influence to be derived (both among Regents and legislators). Also, there were academic support services, novel programs (e.g., the graduate program announced to begin in fall quarter 1979 - it would be almost another decade before the first graduate programs began appearing at Southern Tech once the schools separated), and the potential resources of the Georgia Tech Educational Foundation.¹⁰⁸ That few of these benefits were any longer (if ever) being realized in 1979 does not preclude the potential they offered. During the first two decades of the school's existence, Georgia Tech seemed to regard Southern Tech more as a useful if not treasured adjunct to their own program. But by the 1970s, Georgia Tech seems to have begun to regard Southern Tech as a rival in funding, in jobs for graduates, and in donations from industry in spite of the different emphases of their programs.

The Carlson administration encountered increasingly severe difficulties, even

¹⁰⁶MDJ, 13 June 1980.

¹⁰⁷Perennial complaints, many of which were directly or indirectly blamed on Georgia Tech, included out-of-date equipment, faculty salaries too low to attract and keep qualified faculty, construction needs, library expansion needs, and low per-student funding. In reality, it would be 4-10 years after separation before most of these concerns were completely addressed.

¹⁰⁸STIng, 3 March 1976. STA.

though the school continued to grow and prosper in many statistically supportable ways. Dean Carlson had never relocated from Tucker to Marietta, which hampered his recognition in the community and his personal community involvement. Perhaps more directly related to the problems the school was experiencing with Georgia Tech, decisions made by the Carlson administration were often subject to correction or even complete revision at Georgia Tech, creating a sense of powerlessness, lack of accountability, and frustration for faculty, staff, and even students. Eventually, every department head resigned and had to be replaced during the decade of Carlson's administration. That the school prospered and maintained its reputation in industry, despite the problems, testifies to the important service Southern Tech was rendering in engineering education. There was also the professionalism of faculty, staff, and administration who, despite their differences, kept the task of education foremost. Neither separation nor absorption was a certainty at the outset, but when separation evolved seemingly as the best decision, Southern Tech was ready to assume independence and move into its future.

CHAPTER 6

Into the Maelstrom

During Southern Tech's struggle for independence from Georgia Tech, Georgia industry was unexpectedly quiet. In all previous major events in the history of Southern Tech, Georgia industries' support had been marshalled: creation of the school, relocation to Cobb County, elevation to four-year status. However, except for the textile industry (which insisted that the textile program jointly conducted by Southern Tech and Georgia Tech remain at Georgia Tech if separation did occur) there were no notable industry voices involved in the separation issue. This absence was due perhaps less to a lack of overall support for the idea of separation than it was a symptom of erosion in the Southern Tech - Georgia industry relationship which occurred during the 1970s.¹ Whatever may be the reason for the change, the Cheshier administration needed to make public relations a top priority, and not just with industry.² It was still desperately needed within the community and the state; even in Marietta many people had not yet realized that Southern Tech had become a four-year school. But public relations was only one of many issues.

Another priority involved facilities. The public image of Southern Tech was of an overcrowded, underfunded, poorly equipped school. Before the separation issue had been decided, the Regents had already commissioned architects to draw up plans for facility expansion at Southern Tech, possibly including a computing facility, a new classroom building, a continuing education facility, and outdoor recreation facilities. Also, desperately needed were another large dormitory, faculty offices, an enlarged student center, and an expanded library. During the struggle for separation, further action on these items had been delayed, but over the next decade many of these facility needs would be met. And by the end of the Cheshier administration all of the remaining building requirements which he identified in 1980 would be at least into the design stage.³

¹Interview with Hoyt L. McClure, 24 August 1995. STA.

²STING, 10 October 1980. STA.

³On 30 June 1997, Cheshier stepped down as president. During his tenure, perhaps the most elusive of the construction projects was dormitory funding, which seems to be a common problem for colleges. Funding won preliminary approval in 1995 and then languished for two years before final funding arrangements were approved.

Once Cheshier assumed the Presidency of Southern Tech, he deferred any building initiatives in order to immediately focus on rebuilding the school's relationship with industry and to initiate a public relations campaign.⁴ As part of this campaign, he gave precedence to recruitment, enrollment, and retention. These are measures of a school's effectiveness and one of the elements which drive state funding.⁵ In addition, Southern Tech had untapped potential for new program development which could enhance the school's visibility and relationship with industry: a graduate degree in engineering technology, a center for training engineering technology faculty for technical institutes (which were beginning to proliferate in two-year vocational-technical schools), and a capstone degree for graduates of vocational-technical schools who desired to continue their formal education to the baccalaureate level.

By his inauguration ceremony, April 12, 1981, President Cheshier had already seen momentum building on campus.⁶ Student enrollments were beginning to climb dramatically, the public image of the school was changing, a long-standing, frustrating problem with parking had been resolved, and a new organizational structure for the school was nearing completion.⁷ During the three decades under Georgia Tech's suzerainty, the administrative structure had been relatively simple, many decisions having been made by the department chairs and the Director, either

⁴MDJ, 7 September 1980. This was, of course, the optimum moment for both of these priorities, in the wake of the publicity and changes which had so recently occurred in conjunction with the separation issue. Though in the ensuing years the relationship with industry was strengthened, public relations remained a more difficult area and Southern Tech's identity, even in the local community remained unclear.

⁵MDJ, 9 December 1980. In the fall quarter Southern Tech had an 8.5% increase in enrollment. For the same period, Kennesaw College (formerly Junior College) experienced a 5.5% decline in enrollment. It would seem that the public attention over the separation issue had given a positive image for the school, quite apart from any organized recruitment efforts.

⁶STING, 10 April 1981. STA. "Inauguration Program and Speeches," 12 April 1981. STA, President's Files.

⁷O. C. Hubert (broker) to Tom Moreland (Director, Georgia Department of Transportation), 29 February 1980; Hubert to Sutton (Cobb County Engineer) and J. R. Robertson, 3 March 1980; Robertson to Dunham (Vice-Chancellor for Facilities), 10 March 1980. Martin (Drive-in owner) to Smith, 6 March 1980. STA, Presidential Files. Clearly these things were already in progress before Cheshier arrived, and the drive-in had already been in use for parking, but its purchase was a stronger step. Actually, much of the momentum at this point was derived from before Cheshier arrived, but the task was to keep it moving. Until the deep national recession of 1989-93 the momentum generally continued.

individually or as one corporate body. After separation had been approved, a campus committee developed a post-separation organizational structure for the campus.⁸ However, Cheshier preferred to develop his own administrative structure.⁹ While the new structure carried with it new titles for most of the senior administration, more significant was the additional bureaucracy which the new structure interposed between the chief academic officer of the school and the department chairs. The newly created position of Vice-President and Dean was filled in December 1981 with the appointment of Dr. Harris T. Travis, previously Chair of the Mechanical Engineering and Technology Department at Purdue University.¹⁰ Since President Cheshier needed to be absent from campus frequently for meetings within the University System, at professional activities representing the school, and to cultivate relationships with industry and alumni, the new structure made sense. On the other hand, it also introduced a potential communication problem between the senior administrative level and the academic departments, which had not previously existed. Only by sustained and determined effort by administration and faculty would the same free transfer of information previously enjoyed have been able to continue. Instead, a tendency toward administrative isolation developed which was complicated by later reorganizations of the administrative structure.

The new administrative organization, however well-intentioned, also came at a difficult juncture. Academic departments were still adjusting to the numerous changes in operation caused by the separation from Georgia Tech, and indeed many former problems had not disappeared. Offices were still cramped; laboratory equipment still needed updating; and funding was still inadequate. The entire United States was struggling to recover from the period of recession and high inflation which followed the price controls (1971-72) implemented by President Richard Nixon, and the Arab Oil Embargo (1973-74), resulting in double-digit interest rates at the end of the 1970s. No matter how great the needs at Southern Tech, the state of Georgia had only limited funds available with which to meet the needs of over 30 schools within the State University System. In addition, at Southern Tech, statutes, policies, and procedures had yet to be fully established, creating confusion and frustration for faculty and administration alike. On interim campus committees, opinions frequently

⁸Cheshier to Propst, 27 February 1981. STA, Presidential Files.

⁹STING, 17 July 1981. STA. Cheshier to All STI Faculty and Staff, 26 August 1981. STA, Presidential Files. The Regents approved it during August 1981.

¹⁰Memo: Cheshier to All STI Faculty, 19 November 1981; Cheshier to Crawford, 25 November 1981; Cheshier to All Faculty and Staff, 9 December 1981. STA, Presidential Files. Travis assumed his duties effective 4 January 1982.

and seriously were in conflict with one another, which President Cheshier's absences from the campus only served to complicate.¹¹

In late 1981, a poll was conducted on campus in order to assess the faculty's feelings on a number of issues.¹² Significantly, the poll indicated a feeling that the school's image had improved and that the president's absences from campus for this purpose should continue. However, the poll also indicated a strong desire on the part of the faculty that the president should somehow increase his presence on campus. Considerable concern also surfaced over various communication issues, facility and laboratory problems, and recruitment. Some months following the poll, a forum to address the communication issues was held. Cheshier suggested that problems in this regard existed across the spectrum: between administrators and between administrators and the rest of the school.¹³ Cheshier explained that each administrator "gets caught up in the affairs of his or her department" and failed to let the others know what was happening.¹⁴ Subsequently, personnel shifts, training courses, and computer networking were used to attempt to deal with the problem.¹⁵ However, this problem is seemingly endemic on many campuses, especially larger ones; it is sometimes managed, but rarely overcome. At Southern Tech the problem was especially irksome because for so many years the administrative structure had been lower key and communication problems on campus seemed more manageable; the school's primary communication problems had been with Georgia Tech, but now these problems had simply shifted to the Southern Tech campus itself.

At the forum, the president also sounded a positive note regarding faculty concerns over facilities with the announcement of Regents' approval of design money

¹¹Cheshier to STI Faculty and Administrators, 27 April 1981; Memo: Cheshier to All STI Faculty, 19 November 1981. STING, 8 February 1982. STA, Presidential Files. In the memo there is a tone of defensiveness and an awareness that his absences were creating some difficulty, but Cheshier felt it was a key aspect of his job to keep the STI story "out there" by attending conferences, meeting with industry representatives, alumni, and friends of the school.

¹²Survey results, January 1982. STA, Presidential Files.

¹³STING, 2 August 1982. STA. The forum actually occurred on 20 May 1982.

¹⁴ibid.

¹⁵See, for example, President's Ad Hoc Advisory Committee, 13 June 1983; Myers-Briggs training mentioned in the Annual Report for 1985; or the Continuous Campus Improvement effort which was initiated in 1994.

for a new academic building.¹⁶ This approval would, in fact, be the beginning of a sustained building campaign on campus. Though funding was still tight and the summer program had been scaled back due to budgetary limitations, it had been over 15 years since an academic building had been constructed on the campus. During that time, the student population had doubled and was presently expanding at a rate far exceeding that of every other school in the University System. Southern Tech's new academic building was the only University System construction to be funded by the 1983 legislature.¹⁷

The first steps toward alleviating overcrowding in faculty offices began by constructing offices alongside the first floor walkways in buildings where academic departments were located, thereby turning the walkways into hallways. In April 1983, in a controversial action, a modular building was erected on campus. Located between two academic buildings, this structure was to house, at least temporarily, the bookstore and campus post office, thereby freeing space elsewhere for use.¹⁸ While the academic building was under construction, desperately needed expansion of the library was also begun.¹⁹ The new academic building was finished in 1986 and the refurbished library facility was opened for use in 1988.²⁰

The academic program at Southern Tech developed almost more dramatically than the physical facilities during the early 1980s. This expansion was fueled in part by dramatic enrollment increases. Although by 1986 enrollment was beginning to plateau, between 1979 and 1986 enrollment was up 47% to approximately 3700 students. These increases led to larger allocations by the Georgia legislature and the Regents, resulting in upgraded laboratories through multiple-year funding allocations, increased faculty salaries to attract and keep qualified instructors, and development of

¹⁶System Supplement, June 1982; STING, 2 August 1982. STA.

¹⁷STING, 22 April 1983; STING, 12 March 1984. STA.

¹⁸Summers to Cheshier, 17 January 1983; Travis to Summers, 17 January 1983. STA, Presidential Files. STING, 6 May 1983. STA. System Supplement, February 1983. The building was erected on 25 April 1983. Objections to it included possible traffic congestion, safety, and unsightliness. When the expanded student center (see below) opened, the bookstore and post office returned to the student center and the modular building was refurbished to house the Continuing Education Department.

¹⁹STING, 4 February 1986. Approval came in 1985, but actual construction had to be delayed until 1986 due to the close proximity of the academic building to the library.

²⁰The addition opened early, on 27 August 1987, but the older section had then to be renovated and refurbished.

a variety of program initiatives and degree options.²¹ Even as President Cheshier was being inaugurated in 1981, a new program in computer science was under development, which was to be offered by the Electrical Engineering Technology Department. This program would offer both Associate's and Bachelor's degrees. In addition, a new department was to be created to focus specifically on the computer science discipline.²² For the initiation of this program, Lockheed Corporation donated considerable software. The program was approved and funded in 1982, and the first students were immediately accepted into the program.²³ Sustained strong interest on the part of industry in Southern Tech students with computer science degrees has driven this program. Significantly, the Computer Science Department would be the first to offer a bachelor's degree in a non-technical specialty.

Another significant step for the school's academic program came in 1985-86, when the first Master's degree program, in Technology Management, was developed. Over the years, a small number of Southern Tech graduates had gone on to obtain advanced degrees and the offering of graduate degrees at Southern Tech had been considered for a number of years. It was generally agreed that if such a program were developed, management would be the natural discipline for Southern Tech students.²⁴ However, several area schools already offered advanced degrees in management. On the other hand, technology and the management of technology often require a different perspective and focus, particularly at mid-level management positions and below. Managers at these levels need the interpersonal skills of management training and the technological and scientific background of a technology program to be effective. Thus a Master's degree in Technology Management was approved by the Regents in October 1985. The following fall quarter (1986-87) the first students were admitted into the program.²⁵

²¹1986 Annual Report. STA.

²²Cheshier to H. Dean Propst (Vice-Chancellor), 11 December 1981. STA, Presidential Files.

²³Propst to Cheshier, 14 December 1981; Cheshier to Ray Cleere (Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs), 7 May 1982. STA, Presidential Files.

²⁴Carlson to Duncan, Jackson, Pettit, et al., 17 December 1976. STA, Presidential Files. It will be recalled that the year in which separation was approved, in fact, Georgia Tech proposed to offer graduate work on the Southern Tech campus. It would be difficult to say whether the plan was the natural result of a campus ready for such a program or a timely political maneuver to keep the school linked to Georgia Tech. Certainly, for many at the time, the latter was considered more likely.

²⁵STING, 29 October 1985.

The only other possible graduate degree program appropriate to Southern Tech at the time was in technology, in particular, to prepare instructors for vocational-technical schools which had been one of Cheshier's interests since assuming the presidency of Southern Tech.²⁶ Georgia industry also identified several other needs which Southern Tech could address.²⁷ One of the obvious ways a school can contribute to the community and its target clientele is through continuing education programs. Indeed, from the beginning, this had been an important part of the Southern Tech curricula and service to industry.²⁸ During the 1970s, however, the continuing education program on campus had been underfunded and struggled to be effective.²⁹ In October 1981, Southern Tech received a federal grant of \$900,000 over three years for the development of its continuing education program.³⁰ Thus, one of the first administrative appointments Cheshier made was that of a Continuing Education Director.³¹

During 1982 and 1983, there was an opportunity to acquire land owned by the Elks Club adjacent to campus property on the west. The Elks' property included a building suitable for offices and classrooms for a proposed Callaway Continuing

²⁶Atlanta Constitution, 6 November 1984.

²⁷"Needs Analysis Report," June 1982, p. 14. STA, Presidential Files. Graduate programs in Technology and Management were but two areas cited in the report. Other items included increasing the number of Engineering Technology graduates, expanding the Continuing Education program, and strengthening the state-wide mission.

²⁸During those first, lean years for the school, it was such programs which kept the school alive financially as special courses and contract schools were offered for the military and for various industrial needs. Such programs led to the development of the Gas Fuel curriculum and much later to the Fire Training program at the school.

²⁹For a number of years before separation, Southern Tech had had to remit to Georgia Tech 50% of its income from Continuing Education activities; sometimes this resulted in underfunding the department or in causing it to run a deficit.

³⁰Cheshier to Crawford, 7 October 1981. STA, Presidential Files. STING, 9 October 1981. STA. The award was from HEW (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare).

³¹Cheshier to All STI Faculty, 1 September 1981; Cheshier to All STI Faculty and Staff, 9 November 1981. STA, Presidential Files.

Education Center.³² Unfortunately, the opportunity came at a time of continued national austerity and steep budget cuts within state government so that no money was available from the University System for the purchase.³³ Eventually the land was sold to private developers who built a large apartment complex which would service some of the need of Southern Tech's students for housing, and the Elks continued to occupy their club.³⁴ It would not be until the new academic building was occupied in 1986 that facilities for the Continuing Education Office improved. This office finally obtained its own facilities when it was moved into the refurbished modular building in 1994, with the completion of a student center expansion project.

In 1982, President Cheshier met with Richard Harden, Chairman of the Cobb International Center. The focus of the meeting was on ways in which Southern Tech could meet the county's need for international training. Out of this meeting developed the World Technology Center. It was officially organized in 1983, using the technological resources and international capabilities available at Southern Tech to provide technical support for companies which were beginning to expand their export capacities overseas.³⁵ Initially funded as a private corporation receiving government grants and private contributions, the World Technology Center was expected to become self-supporting in a few years from the fees charged for its services. As the program grew, adding linguistic support and cultural assistance in various forms, the center expanded substantially. In July 1989, the state recognized it as a Public Service Institute of the University System, and the Georgia Legislature approved funding for the center.³⁶ These actions led to a dramatic increase in the assistance the center rendered to Georgia businesses.³⁷ When the Regents established the Regents

³²Dexter Leslie (for the Elks) to Cheshier, 2 September 1982; "Proposed Callaway Continuing Education Center," March 1983. STA, Presidential Files. Within one year of hiring the new director, space limitations were causing curtailment of the continuing education program.

³³Frank C. Dunham (Vice-Chancellor for Facilities) to Cheshier, 30 September 1982; Cheshier To Paul Brown, 25 October 1982; Dunham to Cheshier, 19 November 1982; Cheshier to Dunham, 16 November 1982. STA, Presidential Files.

³⁴Minutes of a Faculty Meeting, 14 September 1982; Minutes of a Faculty Meeting, 24 May 1983. The apartment complex was called College Commons, and now Campus Walk.

³⁵MDJ, Cobb Extra, 18 October 1984.

³⁶Annual Report, 1988-89. STA.

³⁷Annual Report, 1989-90. STA.

Global Center for Business and Education on July 11, 1991, the World Technology Center was included within that initiative.³⁸ The Regents Global Center was conceived as a "one-stop shop" for businesses seeking assistance with their activities in the international market, and as a means of providing higher visibility for the international capabilities latent within the University System of Georgia. The Director of the World Technology Center, Gordon Harrison, became the Director of the Regents Global International Business Center, and the World Technology Center was moved from Southern Tech to Georgia State University in Atlanta where it could draw upon the resources of many of the System institutions.³⁹

By 1986, Southern Tech's program and future goals were clearly larger than those of a technical institute. In 1948, the "Technical Institute" label was perfect for what the school did. Even in 1970, it remained the correct label since the best technical institutes had become four-year programs. But by 1980, the term was no longer being used elsewhere with reference to four-year schools offering degrees in engineering technology, all of which had been renamed. The label "Technical Institute" had reverted backward to a two-year program and implied a vocational degree. For this reason, the administration, along with some faculty, staff, and students, were searching for a name which could better describe the school.⁴⁰ One of the particularly sensitive items in the poll conducted in late 1981 had concerned the possibility of a name change for the school, over which the faculty was equally polarized. Such a name change risked loss of continuity with what the school had been and the reputation Southern Tech had established with industry. Also, use of the word "college" was resisted by many faculty members because it seemed to dilute the technical emphasis of Southern Tech. On the other hand, the fact that new degree programs outside the specifically technical areas were under development, such as the Masters degree in Technology Management, already challenged the traditional image of the school.

By 1982, most of Southern Tech's sister institutions across the country had adopted the name "Institute of Technology," and should a name change take place at Southern Tech, the popular choice was for "Southern Institute of Technology." Of the possible choices circulated among the faculty, "Southern College of Technology"

³⁸Annual Report, 1990-91. STA.

³⁹Ibid. Perhaps more than anything else, the departure of the Center was a loss of prestige for Southern Tech. As internationalization of college campuses has grown in the 1990s, it may also have meant the loss of opportunities for the school.

⁴⁰STING, 7 October 1986. STA.

was the name most vigorously opposed.⁴¹ With the cautious support of the Student Government Association and the National Alumni Association, the issue of a new name for the school began to be studied more seriously. Additional polls were conducted and other ideas solicited. On September 24, 1984, the faculty voted to recommend that the name of the school be changed to "Southern Institute of Technology," but this proposal was tabled by the Regents at their November meeting.⁴² At the time, Vernon Crawford, former Vice-President of Academic Affairs at Georgia Tech, was still the Chancellor. Though he had supported separating Southern Tech from Georgia Tech, the proposed new name could potentially result in confusion between the two schools regarding their roles and missions. In addition, the use of "Southern" implied a possibly broader role and appeal which could suggest Southern Tech had eclipsed Georgia Tech in importance.⁴³ Two more agonizing years of input and discussion followed over what new name might be given to the school.

In a related development, the growth of the school, both in enrollment and in programs, suggested the need for further administrative reorganization to better reflect the current programs of the school and to better position it for the future. Already, degree programs were being offered outside the Engineering Technology structure and with reorganization, even more could be done. In December 1985, the Regents approved a reorganization of Southern Tech into three schools: Arts and Sciences, Engineering Technology, and Management, effective with the fall quarter 1986.⁴⁴ Under this arrangement, the School of Arts and Sciences would house the liberal arts, math, science, and Developmental Studies programs. Considerable discussion took place over the appropriate location for the Computer Science Department, which eventually became part of the School of Arts and Sciences. The Technology Management degree was redesignated a Master of Science in Technical Management.⁴⁵ This reorganization grouped all of the truly technical programs within

⁴¹Faculty Survey results, January 1982. STA.

⁴²Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 8 February 1983; Minutes of a Faculty Meeting, 24 September 1984. Cheshier to Crawford, 29 October 1984; Cheshier to Crawford, 30 November 1984. STA, Presidential Files.

⁴³STING, 7 October 1986. STA. This same year, Southern Tech requested approval to offer a true engineering degree. Clearly both the name issue and the question of an engineering degree had an impact, each on the other, with the Regents and Chancellor.

⁴⁴STING, 9 December 1985. STA.

⁴⁵Ibid.

a single school, Technology, while potentially redefining the traditional technical emphasis of Southern Tech through new programs which might be developed by the other schools.⁴⁶

In spite of the reorganization of the school to better reflect what was already being done and to position the school for future growth, no consensus arose concerning a new name. "University" was still too broad a term to describe the school's program, and "Southern Tech" was identical with the format which vocational-technical schools were either already using or were planning to use, and would only serve to confuse the identity of the school further.⁴⁷ In the summer of 1986, with no consensus over the new name, Cheshier recommended to the Chancellor that the name of Southern Technical Institute be changed to Southern College of Technology, which the Regents approved at their September meeting, to become effective on October 1, 1986.⁴⁸ With this change, Southern Tech became the last of the 15 senior colleges within the State University System to insert the term "college" in its name. On October 3-4, 1986, a campus-wide celebration, open house, and "techfest" was held. The celebration included the official opening of the new academic building, ground breaking for the library extension and for a new Apparel and Textile building with an automated manufacturing laboratory, and dedication of the Burruss auditorium, as well as introducing the community to the school's new name.⁴⁹ This event celebrated both the changes at the school during the first five years of the Cheshier administration and the possibilities for the school as an independent institution.

Student life during this period remained uncomfortably similar to the previous decade. There was the annual Bathtub Race, though by now this was becoming increasingly expensive, even semi-professional, as more alumni and Southern Tech faculty were involved in the event. Football occasionally was

⁴⁶Castellucis to Cheshier, 25 July 1986. STA, Presidential Files.

⁴⁷Memo from Cheshier, 31 July 1986. STA, Presidential Files.

⁴⁸Memo from Cheshier, 9 July 1986; Cheshier to Propst, 6 August 1986; Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting, 10 September 1986; Memo from Cheshier, 10 September 1986. STA, Presidential Files. STING, 5 August 1986. STA. Though the Cheshier administration proposed that the name be changed, before finalizing the recommendation faculty were still given the opportunity to express any further thoughts and to offer other alternatives.

⁴⁹Open House, 3-4 October 1986. STA, Presidential Files. STING, 22 October 1986. STA. An idea similar to techfest, called Expotech, was held at the Cobb Civic Center in November 1984. MDJ, 16 November 1984.

mentioned as a sport for the school, but the idea was quickly dismissed as too expensive for Southern Tech to support. On the other hand, the basketball and baseball teams continued their winning ways. In the 1985-86 basketball season, coach Perides won his 300th game.⁵⁰ And from time to time, a player from the baseball team continued to be drafted by a national franchise. There were dances, homecomings, an annual "beach party," and Goat Week. Of course, study had always been one of the principal vocations of Southern Tech students. Then there were also the usual annoyances of parking problems, loud music, and registration headaches. In addition, library hours and meetings might not fit into one's schedule, administrators could seem unresponsive, and financial aid visits unfruitful.⁵¹ The general financial neglect of the school, during the 1970s, along with rapid enrollment increases helped create or intensify problems experienced by students.

Student dormitories, with a history of poor custodial care, had developed serious problems with pest control, maintenance of plumbing, even safety.⁵² These had declined due to age and neglect as the situation continued unaddressed.⁵³ With a maximum occupancy of approximately 450 students, the dormitories were inadequate to meet the need of the college's increasing student population. As the school expanded rapidly, it was becoming a "suitcase institution" and "commuter school" in which an ever-decreasing percentage of students were on the campus during the nighttime hours and on weekends. Such a situation takes a toll on the entire campus atmosphere. Fewer resident students leads to fewer participants in campus

⁵⁰AJ, 30 January 1986. That was not to be the end of successful seasons - his wins exceed 500 as this goes to press.

⁵¹STING, 7 December 1981. STA. It was suggested that administrators, after hearing frequent complaints, especially ones with which they are either unwilling or unable to deal, appear immune to the problem rather than truthfully responding to the complainant. Before separation, one could always assume or imply that Georgia Tech was to blame whether this was indeed the case or not. But after separation, there was no other chain of command to blame.

⁵²Dean of Students to Carlson, 3 May 1973; Robertson to Cheshier, 27 October 1981; Cheshier to Robertson, 2 December 1981. STA, Presidential Files. During the period 1986-1991, non-residents had been discovered by the security police sleeping in dormitory lounges and using the showers at night. This, it was suggested, could be related to the new bus station built in 1983 at the intersection of South Loop (Route 120) and Highway 41 (Cobb Parkway). It appears there were no serious incidents, but concern focused on the potential for such which the situation invited. STING, 14 May 1991. STA.

⁵³SACS Self-Study Report, 1987-1988; STING, 31 May 1988. STA. The school was cited by SACS both for the problems and for failing to address them during the last decade.

organizations and activities, with a corresponding stagnation or decline in the number of such organizations. Along with this decline, there is less demand for food service and fewer fans for sports activities. Even academics are affected, since more students have to work and commute, often from long distances, reducing study time and increasing the number of years required for completion of a degree or else the possibility of loss by transfer, thus affecting enrollment. Though additional dormitory space was a consistent priority for Cheshier, lack of willingness by the state to fund new dormitories and two serious nationwide economic recessions (1980-83, 1989-91), one possibly bordering on depression, undermined his efforts.⁵⁴

In 1982, a developer contacted Southern Tech, proposing to build a privately-owned dormitory on or near the campus.⁵⁵ Such a solution to the dormitory problem was already under consideration by the Cheshier administration.⁵⁶ In the 1940s, a similar project had quickly provided new facilities for Georgia Tech, but that precedent was of little use since by this time state law prohibited such private development on state property.⁵⁷ Without state funding, any new dormitory would actually have to be privately-owned apartments located as close to campus as possible. The previous failure to acquire the Elks Club property for the school's Continuing Education Office, however, had the beneficial effect of enabling much of that property to be purchased by a developer for construction of off-campus, privately-owned student housing.⁵⁸ When finished, the College Commons apartments could house approximately 470 students in thirteen buildings located only a short walk from the center of campus.⁵⁹ While this helped alleviate the problem of campus housing, it

⁵⁴By 1990, Cheshier indicated the impact of the second, more serious recession was beginning to be felt at Southern Tech. STING, 23 February 1990. STA. MDJ, 23 September 1987.

⁵⁵Larry D. Ashley to Cheshier, 1 October 1982. STA, Presidential Files.

⁵⁶Ibid. A handwritten endorsement to Sam Baker from Cheshier reads "...as you know 3 others are already working with us on ideas for a dorm."

⁵⁷AJC, 21 October 1984. It is suggested that the law may need to be revised due to the difficulty the Regents and schools were having in obtaining funding for dormitories.

⁵⁸Minutes of a Faculty Meeting, 24 May 1983. STA. However, the state would also have only limited and indirect control over the property and its management.

⁵⁹STING Orientation Issue, Fall (September) 1983. STA. The name was later changed to the Campus Walk Apartments. In the late 1980s, some consideration was given to the purchase of these apartments by the school. Upon investigation, however, the idea was abandoned when it appeared the apartments would not meet the standard the state would require. Annual Report, 1985-86; STING, 7

would be another 14 years (1997) before additional on-campus housing would be funded.

The decreasing residential student population upset the food service situation, which already had been maintained only with some difficulty. At times, the Southern Tech food service was nothing more than a snack bar, and regular food service contracts were frequently changed, sometimes even during an academic year. When the student cafeteria was located on the ground floor of Norton dormitory, its convenience and small scale operation, combined with Georgia Tech supervision, had helped keep the situation more stable. But after the student center was built, and the cafeteria services were transferred to that building, it became increasingly difficult for food service to operate profitably. At first the selection, quality, and portions suffered; then prices rose as a new food service contract was negotiated.⁶⁰ These changes set in motion a downward spiral. Students complained, and even threatened a boycott; prices continued to rise, while the Student Government Association passed resolutions, and fewer students used the cafeteria.⁶¹ Nevertheless, food service contracts were frequently changed and the overall situation remained tentative. The fight for better food service was student driven and a symptom of their desire for a stronger, more comfortable atmosphere for their campus and college-life experience. Essentially, enhancing student life on campus means more facilities for the students and their activities and organizations, more personnel, and hence bigger budgets requiring more financial resources.⁶²

The economic situation of the early 1980s was hard on students, particularly those receiving financial aid. Already government programs had been restructured in concert with desegregation programs to assist minorities seeking higher education.⁶³ The federal government under the Reagan administration, in response to the national economic situation, adopted a new philosophy of providing financial assistance to a larger number of students rather than carrying the entire burden of the cost of higher

March 1989. STA.

⁶⁰STING, 19 November 1982. STA. This was the first time there was a change after separation was effective.

⁶¹STING, 18 January 1983. STA.

⁶²Annual Report, 1983-84. STA.

⁶³STING, 20 May 1983. STA.

education for fewer people.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, this restructuring began as the cost of a college education was increasing in response to the excessive inflation of the Carter administration.⁶⁵ By 1985, costs for higher education were still rising at double-digit rates though the economy had recovered and financial aid was more available.⁶⁶ At Southern Tech the wider availability of financial aid did not keep up with increasing costs. Adding to the dormitory problem, this resulted in even more students working and having to extend the time required for graduation to five and even six years or more.

Professional licensing is an issue which touches every person on campus: faculty, students, administrators, and the academic programs. In 1974, a task force on four-year technology of the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) had recommended two tracks for professional licensure.⁶⁷ This began a long-running struggle nationally for continued professional recognition for engineering technology. The task force recommended that engineers follow a different path for licensing than that for engineering technologists. This approach was not welcomed by the Georgia Society of Professional Engineers, who asked their national society to recognize engineering technology curricula as sufficient preparation to allow students to qualify to take the Engineer-in-Training (EIT) exam immediately upon graduation.⁶⁸ At the ECPD Board of Director's meeting in October 1979, it was becoming apparent that "old core societies" for professional engineering were determined to keep engineering technologists a minority within the professional engineering fields.⁶⁹ By the time Southern Tech was separated from Georgia Tech in 1980, two tracks existed for full licensure. Then during the 1984 Georgia legislative session, the Georgia House

⁶⁴STING, 19 November 1982. STA.

⁶⁵STING, 25 August 1983. STA.

⁶⁶ STING, 29 January 1985; STING, 12 February 1985; STING, 26 February 1985. STING, 18 February 1986. STA. MDJ, 20 April 1986. .

⁶⁷"Report of Task Force on Four Year Technology," 1974.

⁶⁸Resolution by the Georgia Society of Professional Engineers, November 1974. That this was clearly not unanimous in Georgia is reflected by a memo from T. E. Stivers (Member of the Georgia State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors) to the Joint Law Revision Committee, 28 February 1975, in which he rejects the Georgia Association resolution. STA, Presidential Files.

⁶⁹Steve Gilman (Professor at Penn State University) to Andrew T. Boggs, III (Executive Director, ASHRAE), 12 February 1980. STA, Presidential Files.

passed a bill which excluded Architectural Engineering Technology graduates from Southern Tech from being able to take the exams for full licensure in Georgia.⁷⁰ This issue did not even last a month before a Georgia Senate bill was passed which effectively killed the House initiative.⁷¹ However, it demonstrated the continued problem of identity and understanding which had plagued the discipline of engineering technology for decades. Neither a research-trained engineer, nor a technician, the engineering technologist relates to both. Frequently, positions calling for engineers are really wanting engineering technologists and the engineers hired into such positions perform the functions of engineering technologists, regardless of their degree. Even combined, America's institutions were hard-pressed to supply the numbers of engineers, engineering technologists, and technicians which industry needed. In 1987, the Soviet Union had only half the college population enjoyed by the United States yet produced six times the number of engineers.⁷² Furthermore, in the Soviet Union, 75% of their graduate students were in science and engineering disciplines; whereas in the United States, only 20% of graduate students were to be found in these disciplines.

Had the 1984 bill limiting licensure passed it would not only have created career limitations for Architectural Engineering Technology graduates of Southern Tech, but there was also a potentially eroding effect on other engineering technology programs. It was also a "wake up call" to the architectural program in general. During this same academic year, the Architectural Engineering Technology Department undertook the design and development of a five-year, fully accredited Architecture program.⁷³ This effort was both a response to the "threat" over licensure which had recently surfaced in the state legislature and consistent with a movement by some faculty and administrators at Southern Tech to obtain approval to offer both engineering and engineering technology degrees.

The question of full engineering has, in fact, been an issue for Southern Tech at least since 1984, when the Regents began to study the feasibility of a second engineering school for the University System. At that time, Southern Tech requested the Regents to allow the school to upgrade its Engineering Technology programs to

⁷⁰STING, 20 February 1984. STA. The bill passed on 9 February; President Cheshier immediately urged concerned students to contact their legislators.

⁷¹STING, 27 February 1984. STA.

⁷²MDJ, 25 September 1987.

⁷³Annual Report for 1983-84. STA.

offer full Engineering degrees in addition to its current offerings.⁷⁴ This set off a firestorm of controversy among the Regents, Chancellor Crawford, and Georgia Tech. It also involved Southern Tech as well as several smaller schools outside the Atlanta regional area.⁷⁵ Southern Tech's position was that it could do the job more quickly and at a much lower cost than any other school and well below the effort Georgia Tech's president indicated would be necessary.⁷⁶ On the other hand, this would also make Southern Tech a more potent rival to Georgia Tech, a situation neither Chancellor Crawford nor the Regents want to see develop. No final action on this issue was ever taken, and a decade later, an outside study suggested to the Regents that no second engineering school was needed by the University System.⁷⁷ The architectural program developed quite differently, however. In the 1989-90 academic year, the School of Architecture was created.⁷⁸ Through diligent planning and careful preparation, an Architecture degree was developed which received full accreditation in the fall quarter 1995 to the strong acclaim and support of its accrediting committee.⁷⁹

As Southern College of Technology, the school continued to develop, though subtle differences were also present. Enrollment, especially among entering freshmen, had begun to level off after almost a decade of strong growth. This change in enrollment could have been attributed to the "baby bust" expected annually since 1981, though some faculty members believed it to be caused by a failure in the

⁷⁴AJC, 21 October 1984. Mercer, a private school not far from Atlanta, moved quickly to act on this suggestion and initiated an Engineering program, the second in the state, but Mercer is a private institution and not under the University System. AJC, 8 December 1984.

⁷⁵AC, 17 December 1984; A, 18 December 1984; AJ, 14 March 1985; AC, 10 April 1985. STING, 21 May 1985. STA.

⁷⁶AJ, 18 December 1984. Pettit was still president at the time. As previously mentioned, the new name and the question of offering engineering had to influence each the other in considerations before the Regents and Chancellor.

⁷⁷STING, 21 November 1995. STA.

⁷⁸Annual Report for 1989-90. STA.

⁷⁹STING, 18 April 1989; STING, 15 May 1990; Annual Report for 1992-93; Memo: Cheshier to SCT Faculty and Staff, 12 September 1995. This also settled the licensure issue since graduates could go anywhere in the U.S. and sit for the examination.

college's recruiting efforts.⁸⁰ Whatever the cause, for some years statistical enrollment figures would continue increasing through non-traditional and graduate student enrollments in spite of the decline in the number of freshman admittances. Thus the total enrollment figures for the school would climb an additional 10-12% before actually leveling off at 4000 students in the 1990-91 academic year.

In spite of being denied approval to offer engineering degrees, one of the means for continued enrollment expansion lay in the potential for program development afforded by the new "college" status. Baccalaureate degrees were developed in Math, Physics, and Chemistry, and soon thereafter, in Technology Management. Eventually a baccalaureate degree was also added in Technical and Professional Communication.⁸¹ Masters degrees in Technical and Professional Communication, Engineering Technology, and eventually in Computer Science added to the expanding graduate programs of the college.⁸² Though engineering technology had been the original focus of the school, as a college Southern Tech was quickly enlarging its niche into the wider arena of technical education. The core curriculum was also reorganized with the addition of a number of course options in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and the introduction of an Associate degree program in general studies.⁸³ Such developments came at a price, however. Not only did they create competition between schools and departments at Southern Tech, they also increased the "critical mass" for enrollments needed for a smooth, efficiently operating program.⁸⁴ This, in turn, added further demands on student life and activities, as well as recruiting, in order to achieve and maintain the "critical mass." Unfortunately, this

⁸⁰ MDJ, 26 June 1985. STING, 17 July 1990. STA. The term "baby bust" refers to the changing demographics caused by the post-World War II baby boom and their off-spring who would be finishing college in this time period, leaving a smaller pool of college-age prospective students. No significant turnaround in this trend would be expected, once it began, until at least 1993.

⁸¹ STING, 31 January 1989; STING, 17 April 1990; Annual Report for 1989-90; Annual Report for 1990-91; STING, 10 March 1992; Annual Report 1991-1992; Annual Report 1992-1993. STA.

⁸² STING, 20 October 1987; Annual Report for 1987-88; Annual Report for 1989-90. STA. MDJ, 15 October 1987. Computer Science was added during 1992-93. Annual Report for 1992-93. STA.

⁸³ Annual Report for 1989-90; STING, 31 January 1989; STING, 18 April 1989. STA. This was stimulated by the 1988 SACS visit which cited this area as needing attention.

⁸⁴ Annual Report for 1990-91. STA. This refers to the student enrollment level needed to be able to offer the full range of courses and maintain the school's financial health. It also involves consideration of scheduling, classroom space and use, numbers of faculty, faculty workload, etc.

point was being reached just as the national economy was heading into what would prove to be its deepest, longest, most problematic recession since the Great Depression of 1929-1933.

Except for a few budget years after 1980, the school and the state frequently felt the impact of tight budgets while the financial neglect of the 1970s had created imperatives for additional funding in virtually every area of Southern Tech's budget. Initially, the state responded fairly quickly to provide buildings for academic needs and funds for program enhancement, but there was a much greater hesitation to support construction for student life. This hesitancy was compounded by rapidly changing demographics in Georgia. The Atlanta area and North Georgia were growing so rapidly that other counties, districts, and institutions in Georgia, already squeezed due to national economic conditions, were being further hurt by these demographic changes. Regions outside the Atlanta area were demanding of the state some return for their educational tax dollar.⁸⁵ Finally, with the erosion in educational effectiveness across Georgia and the United States, support for education remained a powerful political tool. All of these things coming together in the 1980s, made Southern Tech's "catch up" to the funding levels of a senior college and a technical program within the State University System difficult.

Indicative of Southern Tech's situation as it sought to handle larger student bodies and expanded programs is the saga of the student center addition. By 1986, the student center was used almost constantly, and the student body for which it was designed had dramatically outgrown the facility. During the summer quarter, funds were approved by the Regents to design an expansion to the student center and the project was subsequently placed number three on the Regents' funding list, making it a virtual certainty for legislative funding.⁸⁶ However, in an unprecedented action the 1988 legislature rearranged the Regents' priority list so that the student center project was not funded in spite of the efforts of the Regents, Governor, and Cobb legislative delegation.⁸⁷ The ostensible reasons cited for this action were budgetary

⁸⁵STING, 3 December 1982. STA. Kennesaw College and Southern Tech were being funded 13th and 14th out of the 15 senior colleges in the State University System at the time, yet they were numbers 1 and 3 in growth. Conversely, three senior colleges (Columbus, Fort Valley, and Savannah) had funding increases while their enrollments declined.

⁸⁶STING, 5 August 1986. STA. MDJ, 31 December 1987. The beginning of construction was anticipated in late 1988.

⁸⁷MDJ, 27 January 1988. Items were moved from lower on the Regents' list to the top and funded in the current year's supplemental budget, as well as a dormitory for Georgia Southern College that had not even been on the list.

considerations and the needs of areas outside of Atlanta which were pressuring for funding as well.⁸⁸ In reality, the proposed student center had become a victim of Georgia's changing political structure. In particular, Cobb County was rapidly becoming a Republican Party bastion while the state legislature remained under the control of a majority Democratic representation mostly from Georgia's rural counties. The increasing number of Republican representatives from Cobb County, therefore, effectively weakened the county's influence in state politics.⁸⁹

Despite strong Regents' support, expressed by keeping the student center project at the top of the priority list for the next legislative session, the 1989 legislature had to deal with a very tight budget resulting from the national recession and cut the entire capital funding request by the Board of Regents.⁹⁰ Furthermore, the legislature insisted that if funds were found they should be used to benefit all of Georgia and not just Cobb County.⁹¹ Although state politics lay behind this insistence, Southern Tech immediately began seeking more effective means to educate the public to the college's programs and statewide mission, through visual media, radio advertisements, and the creation of an administrative position to increase student enrollments. A petition was circulated (signed by 950 Southern Tech students, 60% of whom were not from Cobb county) and personal meetings took place between students and legislators.⁹² There were also letters from alumni and letters and phone calls from Southern Tech administrators urging restoration of funds for the project. Still, the student center project failed to win funding for a second straight year. The 1989 legislature had been considering imposition of a 1% tax to help fund education projects and all but one member of the Cobb delegation voted against the tax, which was ultimately defeated. However, the legislature did fund building projects on four

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹MDJ, 27 January 1988; MDJ, 28 January 1988; AJ, 17 February 1988. Although no funds had been approved for the student center project, the total amount of the bonds to be sold was almost \$20,000,000 more than the original total which had supposedly prompted legislators to cut the project from the budget.

⁹⁰STING, 1 November 1988. STA.

⁹¹STING, 14 February 1989. STA.

⁹²STING, 7 March 1989. STA. The figure represents approximately 30% of the total student body at the time.

campuses other than Southern Tech, again ignoring the Regents' priority list.⁹³ Even worse for Southern Tech, a slumping economy and resistance to new taxes by the citizens of Georgia might result in additional delays.⁹⁴

The Regents continued to support the student center project by keeping it at the top of their priority list and in March 1990, the project finally received funding approval from the Georgia legislature with virtually no debate.⁹⁵ Usually approval would be the end of the matter; funds would be dispersed, and construction begun.⁹⁶ But with the nation's economy in a deep recession, the Governor froze the state budget; Southern Tech had to surrender 5% of its previously approved budget allocation and the following year would be even worse.⁹⁷ Furthermore, financing of the student center project was to come from state bond sales but the bond market was so soft due to the economy that the project was again delayed then essentially cancelled by the state.⁹⁸ However, after Zell Miller was elected Governor in November 1990, the student center project was included in his supplemental budget which the Georgia legislature approved in March 1991.⁹⁹ Due to the recession, construction projects were relatively few and work was able to move quickly once begun. Bonds were sold in April, and construction began during the fall quarter. The project was finished in 1993, with the celebration of its opening and official naming in honor of Joe Mack Wilson taking place at the beginning of the fall quarter.¹⁰⁰

With all of the difficulties surrounding the student center expansion and with the national economic decline soon after 1986, the school began looking to alternative

⁹³STING, 18 April 1989. STA.

⁹⁴Ibid. It is suggested that the delay could be as much as three years.

⁹⁵STING, 24 October 1989; STING, 7 November 1989; STING, 6 March 1990. STA. Joe Mack Wilson, recently defeated in his bid for reelection to the state legislature, was hired as a part-time consultant though the college denied that the student center project was the reason. His fee was paid privately from the Southern Tech Foundation. He was also a part-time consultant to Kennesaw College at the time.

⁹⁶STING, 17 April 1990. STA.

⁹⁷Annual Report for 1990-91; STING, 25 September 1990. STA.

⁹⁸STING, 17 July 1990; STING, 29 January 1991. STA.

⁹⁹STING, 12 March 1991. STA.

¹⁰⁰Annual Report for 1992-93. STA.

sources for funding of some of its building projects. Just before the issue of the student center project arose, the Governor encouraged the allocation of \$1,600,000 to establish a Center of Excellence in Textile Engineering at Southern Tech. This would be the only center of its kind in the nation, serving the apparel, rug, carpet, sewing, and textile industries.¹⁰¹ Private funds were to provide the remaining \$800,000 for the center. Initially the legislature hesitated on the project before funding it in the fiscal year 1986-87 budget.¹⁰² The center was named in honor of W. Claire Harris.¹⁰³ He had been a generous benefactor to the school, and after his death an academic chair was endowed in his memory. His widow subsequently contributed a substantial part of the money necessary for making the center a reality.

The notion of excellence was a theme which, in some ways, dates to the earliest days of Southern Tech. It was, in fact, because of the high quality of the first graduates that Southern Tech quickly developed a reputation which made it a leader in its field. Following independence in 1980, various initiatives focusing on excellence in technology were developed. During the early 1980s, as part of the "Adopt-a-School" Program of the Atlanta Partnership of Business and Education, Southern Tech "adopted" Douglas High School in Atlanta.¹⁰⁴ Douglas had been designated a magnet school for advanced technology, and this program was to help students explore more deeply the world of technology. Some years later, a new program, Quality-based Education was initiated by the state. However, this program was lacking in the technical area. The need at that time to educate the public about Southern Tech's program fit well with this state initiative, and the Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center concept was born.¹⁰⁵ The parent center was to be located on the Southern Tech campus with branch centers located throughout the state. The centers would offer a miniature "techfest" for youth, in which they could not only see, but feel technology at work through "hands-on" interaction. The first workshop

¹⁰¹MDJ, 16 January 1986.

¹⁰²MDJ, 19 February 1986; MDJ, 7 March 1986.

¹⁰³MDJ, 14 July 1987. STING, 2 June 1987; STING, 11 August 1987. STA. Groundbreaking took place on 7 August 1987. The building was completed during the 1988-89 academic year.

¹⁰⁴MDJ, 28 August 1984.

¹⁰⁵Memo by Cheshier, 17 May 1989; STING, 18 July 1989; STING, 24 October 1989; Annual Report for 1989-90. STA. Both programs were initiatives intended to interest students in technology and technical careers. As a service to the community these programs helped familiarize students with a variety of technological applications.

was held in February 1990, for teachers in the Cobb County school system and elementary teachers in the Marietta City School System.¹⁰⁶ Subsequently the program has expanded to encompass six regional centers offering this experience to Georgia's youth.¹⁰⁷

In 1990, a Center for Quality Excellence was also established on the campus. This program sought to introduce into the academic setting the principles of quality management used by some businesses and industries and to provide consulting services for business and industry in total quality management. The center was subsequently incorporated as a non-profit organization in association with Southern Tech.¹⁰⁸ During the 1992-93 academic year, International Business Machines (IBM) awarded Southern Tech and Clark Atlanta University, jointly, a \$1,000,000 grant to implement total quality management on their campuses.¹⁰⁹ At Southern Tech a 40-hour course was created and made available to all personnel and students on campus.¹¹⁰ Graduates of the course have participated in various focus groups relating to campus improvement, mostly involving relatively minor issues.

Another project of long-standing interest to the Cheshier administration was development of campus recreation centers.¹¹¹ The existing recreational facilities had been constructed in the 1960s, when the school was much smaller, and included a gymnasium, a baseball field, and tennis courts. Within the gymnasium there was a weight room. However, after usage by varsity and intramural teams for practice or competition, precious little time was available for general student use. When all state funding channels seemed to be exhausted, Cheshier began to look for alternative ways

¹⁰⁶STING, 6 February 1990. STA.

¹⁰⁷Annual Report for 1990-91; Annual Report for 1991-92. STA.

¹⁰⁸Annual Report for 1990-91. STA.

¹⁰⁹Annual Report for 1992-93. STA. The principles focus broadly on management interaction with the consumer to identify needs, and interaction with employees to decide how best to meet those needs. One of the challenges faced in applying these principles to the academic setting is defining what the product is and who the consumer is. Is the student the consumer, or the product? If the student is the consumer, then what role does the employer of graduates play in the structure?

¹¹⁰Annual Report for 1993-94. STA. The long-term impact of this program on the campus can only be assessed at a future time.

¹¹¹STING, 10 October 1980. STA.

to fund the construction.¹¹² One possibility was to convert the Fire Academy complex into an indoor recreation facility with weight rooms, racquet ball courts, and a swimming pool.¹¹³ When this plan was not successful, it was decided to develop an outdoor center on some property at the southwestern side of campus, as part of a master plan which included an area identified for future construction of fraternity houses. A separate indoor facility, more central to campus would also be constructed containing weight rooms, indoor courts, and a swimming pool.¹¹⁴

In 1987, as Southern Tech was about to celebrate its fortieth anniversary and Kennesaw College its twenty fifth, the colleges began a joint \$4,000,000 fund-raising campaign with each school to receive half the money raised.¹¹⁵ Kennesaw College wanted to build a multi-purpose amphitheater, and Southern Tech intended to use its share for the recreational facilities.¹¹⁶ Though a portion of the goal was met through promised contributions from large corporations, the public portion of the campaign began just as fears over the economy were building and the overall results were disappointing. The net income for Southern Tech was only \$600,000, well below the estimated \$2,000,000 needed for the recreation projects.¹¹⁷ While the on-going difficulties over the student center project had by this time arisen, and the state was not willing to provide funding for recreational projects anyway, the money from the capital campaign could be used for the outdoor complex.¹¹⁸ In early 1991, the Southern Tech Foundation also approved a gift to the college to be applied toward the construction of the recreation centers, and shortly thereafter, with Regents approval, construction of the outdoor complex began.¹¹⁹

Awarding the 1996 Olympic Games to Atlanta introduced new possibilities for an indoor recreation complex. Not only might there be income from renting some

¹¹²STING, 3 June 1983. STA.

¹¹³MDJ, 4 February 1985. The Academy departed the Southern Tech campus in 1986.

¹¹⁴STING, 1 September 1987. STA.

¹¹⁵STING, 17 November 1987. STA.

¹¹⁶MDJ, 22 January 1988. STING, 2 February 1988. STA.

¹¹⁷STING, 16 October 1990. STA.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹STING, 12 March 1991. STA.

of the school's facilities to the Olympic organizing committee, but if the new indoor facility were completed by then, it could possibly be used for one or more of the venues. As a result, the indoor facility was enlarged to almost twice its previously planned size.¹²⁰ Funding for the indoor complex would come from multiple sources. One portion included the gift from the Southern Tech Foundation.¹²¹ Another involved the sale of a parcel of land to Life College.¹²² Yet another part of the package was a loan, to be repaid from student activity fees collected by the college.¹²³ The outdoor facility was completed in 1995, and dedication of the indoor facility was held in October 1996.

In spite of the building activities and the continued increase and diversification of academic and related programs, the period after 1988 was a difficult one for the college in a number of ways. There had been numerous problems between the administration and academic departments during the early years of the Cheshier administration, but the impact of these problems was limited by a growing student body, better funding, development of needed physical facilities, and an enhanced overall program. The initial rumblings of more serious future problems were first felt in the Placement and Continuing Education offices. In 1989, only 70% of graduates reported having received job offers. This was a dramatic reversal of the usual situation in which graduates often had several offers from which to choose.¹²⁴

¹²⁰STING, 16 April 1991. STA. Ironically, the pool was still too small for an Olympic venue. Only the school's parking lots were used during the Olympic Games. It is not clear, had the Atlanta Committee on the Olympic Games chosen Southern Tech as a site for a venue, that the school would have received enough financial reward to do what Cheshier had in mind.

¹²¹Annual Report for 1992-93. STING, 12 March 1991. STA. The funding package was eventually approved as a "payback" project financed from student activity fees, donations, the Student Athletic Reserve Fund, and Foundation gifts.

¹²²Ibid. This parcel, as it later turned out, created quite a few difficulties since it was not, technically, at the time owned by Southern Tech, and title had to be shifted in order to close the deal. While the transaction eventually took place, the problems were only discovered after both schools were heavily involved in the deal.

¹²³Ibid. The plan to use the student activity fees in this manner also turned into a major problem. The administration promised the students that the fees would only be collected after the complex was finished. However, the state subsequently informed the college that a change in fees had to begin when the project was initiated, not at its conclusion. This was considered by many students a serious breach of trust by the administration, and contributed to considerable estrangement between the two parties.

¹²⁴Annual Report for 1988-89. STA.

The Continuing Education office that year also reported a sharp decline in training for the federal government.¹²⁵ By the following year, the Continuing Education program had experienced reductions of eight to sixteen percent in its activities.¹²⁶

During 1990, the financial difficulties gripping the nation were felt locally. Library funding had already fallen to inadequate levels, and there were serious personnel problems in the school's Counseling Center.¹²⁷ Despite having received a 7% budget increase in the fiscal year 1990-91 budget, Southern Tech was abruptly cut short in its plans and programs - as was the entire University System. In October 1990, an overall budget reduction of 3 to 5% was imposed on the school.¹²⁸ Since this was done months after budget approval, cuts were difficult to make: maintenance could be stretched, leading to deterioration in equipment; laboratory upgrades and replacements could be delayed, diminishing the overall quality of the educational program; advertising and other public relations activities could be curtailed, with a corresponding impact on recruitment, enrollment, and fund-raising; and even faculty could suffer if funds were unavailable to attract and retain qualified instructors. To make matters worse, the Vice-President for Financial Affairs was fired the same month.¹²⁹

The economic situation across the United States, including the state of Georgia, continued to worsen during 1991-92, and so went the University System, and Southern Tech. During the 1991-92 academic year, a 10% budget cut was imposed upon the school, on top of the previous year's cut. It was becoming difficult to find additional areas to cut. Travel, operating expenses, etc. could be touched without eliminating personnel. But eventually it became necessary to eliminate 13 filled personnel positions, leading to a serious decline in morale on campus and a malaise

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Annual Report 1989-90. STA.

¹²⁷Annual Report 1989-90. STA. A problem shared by libraries across the country, funds were expended on periodicals to such an extent that too little was left to maintain or increase the library's collection. At the Counseling Center, the workload simply exceeded the staffing, leading to rapid personnel turnover.

¹²⁸Annual Report for 1990-91. STA.

¹²⁹STING, 30 October 1990; STING, 13 November 1990. STA. Allegations included a pattern of sexual harassment and an intimidating management style.

caused by a sense of uncertainty about the future.¹³⁰ Certain activities, such as advising, were simply added to the responsibility of academic departments or other offices. To consolidate functions and responsibilities, personnel shifts were widespread, leading to inefficiencies, confusion, and general frustration around the campus. Some important positions simply went unfilled. The Development, College Relations and Public Relations functions were all combined. Despite a 17 to 45% decline in corporate donations, no Director of Annual Giving was appointed.¹³¹

Exacerbating the whole situation was the appearance of callousness created by the building initiatives. While economic difficulties were at their lowest point, the new student center expansion and the outdoor recreation center complex, as well as other buildings, were either on the drawing boards or beginning construction. Though funding for capital improvements and certain other expenses came from sources other than salaries, personnel costs, and operating expenses, when there is a question of job retention, it is hard to accept funding approvals for new building activities. Another problem which intensified during this period was the separation between staff and academic personnel. Based on State University System averages, Southern Tech was top-heavy in staff so that when layoffs occurred, it was primarily among non-instructional personnel.

Though overall enrollment was still stable or increasing until 1990, much of this enrollment increase was from the proliferation of new Master's degree programs.¹³² At the undergraduate level alone, the long-anticipated "baby bust" enrollment decline began just at the onset of the economic recession of 1989-93. The crisis in the Persian Gulf, beginning in August 1990, also upset the careers and study activities of thousands of reservists across the nation. It also temporarily reduced the number of students entering or completing their studies at Southern Tech that academic year. Despite the efforts of the Office of Enrollment Management,

¹³⁰Annual Report for 1991-92. STA. The Office of Enrollment Management was among these 13 positions eliminated. Indeed, since its elimination student enrollment remained virtually level. In 1997, after several years of concern expressed by the faculty, a similar position was again created to increase enrollment toward state mandated goals (approximately 4600 by the year 2000). In his report, President Cheshier refers to 1991-92 as a difficult year.

¹³¹Annual Report for 1991-92. STA. The large percentages reflect different categories of giving, some of which declined more than others.

¹³²STING, 17 July 1990. STA.

enrollment stagnated at 4026.¹³³ Through the summer quarter of 1996, enrollments continued to fluctuate just below 4000 in spite of increases at Kennesaw State College and a rapidly increasing population in Cobb County.

The combined impact of these problems, some of which were outside the ability of the college to control, resulted in increased estrangement and distrust both within and between various departments on the campus and with the administration. In 1989, the overall situation on campus was described in the campus newspaper, the STING, as one of low morale and dissatisfaction while the administration focused on image and protection of supervisors and the use of fear of job loss to "keep people in line" when leadership was questioned.¹³⁴ While similar comments could at times be made regarding the leadership of virtually any organization or school, large or small, there clearly was an underlying degree of dissatisfaction present on campus which, given sufficient opportunity, might lead to serious problems. Most significant, all the issues addressed were relational in character. This, in fact, was one of the underlying problems left unaddressed at least since 1970. The college had maintained its reputation academically, had grown physically, and had retained its prestige with industry; but its relational qualities suffered, undermining the unity and clear purpose which the campus needed to persevere during difficult periods. The emotional stress was further intensified by personnel cuts, and the possibility of more if the situation did not quickly change.

By 1993, the Placement Office reported that job opportunities for graduating seniors were increasing amid signs that the worst was over.¹³⁵ However, recovery was slow, halting, and uneven. By September, enrollment had increased 1% though the decline the previous year had been 2.1%, still leaving a deficit from 1989. Occupancy in the dormitories continued to suffer, with few if any students even on a waiting list for on-campus housing. In 1992-93, there were further budget cuts affecting personnel and morale. The almost continuous change in personnel at the Counseling Center did not stabilize until late 1993, and the Development Office remained understaffed and underfunded well into 1994. Similarly, Auxiliary Services had

¹³³Annual Report for 1989-90. STA. By the end of the economic cycle, this office had been eliminated as part of the personnel cuts.

¹³⁴STING, 28 November 1989. STA.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*

experienced significant instability during this period and was slow in recovering.¹³⁶

By the summer of 1994, Southern Tech's "honeymoon" as a separate institution of the State University System had long been over. Yet, even in the midst of economic and other difficulties the school continued to maintain its reputation within industry while it pursued new directions and developed new programs. Already mentioned were the Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center program (1989), the Center for Quality Excellence (1990-91), and a joint Total Quality Management program with Clark Atlanta University (1993).¹³⁷ New curricular options continued to be developed to further address the needs of industry. As the enrollment continued generally stagnant, the Admissions Office was reorganized; articulation agreements with some vocational-technical schools were developed, and a dual-enrollment program was initiated with Marietta High School.¹³⁸ The dual-enrollment program allows select students to begin enrolling for college credits which also count toward the student's graduation from high school, thereby providing advanced standing for the student upon entering college.¹³⁹ A new dimension in delivering higher education, Distance Learning, began development in 1994. If proven effective, this will enable Southern Tech to offer classes and even whole courses and degree programs to select sites across the state of Georgia (and even internationally). With a statewide mission, Southern Tech could in this way expand participation in its programs to many locations across the state.

During the decade beginning in 1986, when Southern Tech was formally recognized as a college, dramatic changes in the academic program and campus environment occurred. As 1986 began, the college had no Master's degree program, offered only one primary degree, Engineering Technology, and was housed basically in the same campus environment into which it had first located in 1961. Despite the difficulties recounted earlier, by 1996 the academic program was substantially

¹³⁶Ibid. This includes food service, bookstore, etc. During 1992-93, a concerted effort was made to help Auxiliary Services, resulting in an enormous one year increase in profitability, but this disappeared the following year.

¹³⁷Annual Report for 1992-1993; Annual Report for 1993-1994 STA.

¹³⁸In a curious development, for most of its history, Southern Tech struggled not to be identified with the vocational-technical schools. In 1995, however, Southern Tech was one of four schools directed by the Board of Regents to consider creating a capstone degree program for graduates of the vocational-technical schools. These schools are growing in number, are well-funded by the state, and represent a source for strengthening enrollments. Though the idea was approved by the faculty in late 1995, implementing the degree program was much more painful.

¹³⁹Annual Report for 1991-1992. STA.

expanded. In addition to the Engineering Technology discipline, degrees were offered in Architecture, Management, the Sciences, and Technical and Professional Communication. Advanced degrees also became available in several of these disciplines. Numerous international exchange programs and a minor in International Studies have further expanded the scope of the college's program far beyond Marietta and Atlanta. Consultants advised the administration in 1995 that it should again begin considering a change of name. The school already functioned in many ways as a special purpose university offering programs in a variety of disciplines, and it was suggested that the inclusion of the word "university" in the school's name would add prestige and strengthen its marketability. In April 1996, Chancellor Stephen R. Portch became the catalyst for this change.¹⁴⁰ During a meeting with the presidents of the 34 institutions within the State University System, he indicated that all schools offering graduate degree programs should include "state university" in their name. After a brief period of discussion and consideration of possible options by the faculty, staff, and administration, the Chancellor's office recommended to the Regents on July 10, 1996, that Southern Tech be officially elevated to university status. With the passing of this recommendation, the college was renamed Southern Polytechnic State University.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰Interview with President Stephen Cheshier, 17 July 1996.

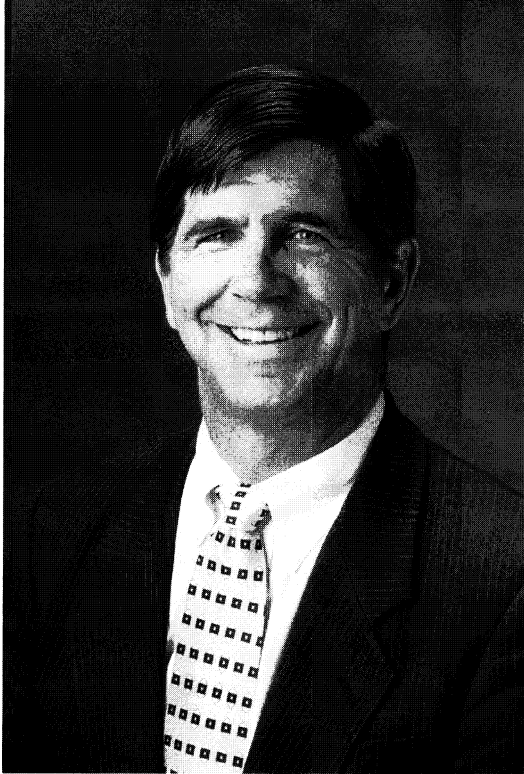
¹⁴¹Minutes of the Board of Regents Meeting, 10 July 1996.



Southern Polytechnic State University, 1997.



Dr. Stephen R. Cheshier, first President of Southern Tech, 1980-1997.



Dr. Daniel W. Papp, Interim-President of Southern Polytech, 1997-1998

CHAPTER 7

Meeting the Challenge

As Southern Polytechnic State University prepared to enter her second half century, President Cheshier stepped down from the presidency to finish his career in the classroom.¹ In a controversial move shortly before his departure, five of the university's 11 department chairs were unexpectedly removed.² These events climaxed a year of increasing controversy between the faculty and administration at the university over administrative actions, the future of the school, and a variety of other issues, many rooted in unaddressed problems pre-dating the school's independence. Dr. Daniel Papp, previously Executive Assistant to the President of Georgia Tech and Professor of International Affairs, assumed the role of interim President at Southern Polytech on July 1, 1997. Through his leadership, and that of the person chosen to be the second President of the school, Southern Polytech will seek to meet the challenges and opportunities of university status, perhaps the most important being intra-campus relationships.

Indeed, since 1986, Southern Polytech increasingly reflected some characteristics of a university: a strong faculty, a widely respected reputation, diverse degree programs, and graduate-level education. On the other hand, challenges lingered from unaddressed problems and from the speed of the transition from a single-degree-granting institute to a university. These transitions involved goal redirections and even sometimes led to changing traditions and expectations. In the 1991-92 academic year, the annual Bathtub Race, a tradition on the campus for 25 years, was permanently ended. Student activities relating to "the Rock" changed. New traditions such as "Techfest" were initiated. The traditional emphasis on applied technology also underwent redirection. New curricula in the sciences, computers, technical communication, and international studies were all developed in response to the broadening needs of industry. And whole new areas of study, in management and architecture, further served to shift the college's focus.

The wide-ranging, rapid changes created administrative and emotional pressures. Departments which for decades had been the focus of the school's academic program found themselves suddenly competing with new departments for students, for faculty positions, for equipment and upgrades, and for operational

¹Memo: Cheshier to Campus, 26 February 1997. STA.

²STING, 3 June 1997.

budgets. The new programs also led to restructuring of even the core subjects of study and their content was brought more in line with what was found at other University System schools (mostly those focusing on the liberal arts). Interdepartmental competition developed into competition between schools after the 1986-87 reorganization into schools of Arts and Sciences, Management, Technology, and later, also the School of Architecture. When the financial problems of 1989-93 developed, the school was ill-prepared to handle the resulting stress. Estrangement between administration and academic departments, common on college campuses, developed into a struggle of suspicion and distrust. Elevated to a university in 1996, and with new administrative leadership in 1997, Southern Polytech needs to deal effectively with these issues in order to build strong, unified relationships on campus.

Another challenge for the university will be to strengthen enrollment. During the 1980s, recruiting was successful, at least partly because of a growing national economy which supported technical careers. While this situation has not completely changed in the 1990s, there are new demands from industry in areas of communication, international awareness and experience, and personal breadth of individual employees. In addition, there are changes in the engineering technology field itself, which tend to emphasize engineering. These changes suggest that at Southern Polytech there is a need to focus on three areas. First, it will be necessary to continue doing well that which has so successfully built the school's reputation.

Second, a stronger, and possibly uncomfortable focus will be required in the non-technical areas as well. In particular, language and the social sciences, traditionally shunned by technical education, will be significant in training the graduates of Southern Polytech that industry needs and wants.³ Also, international experience, either through coursework or by living and studying abroad, will become increasingly important for students. Unless Southern Polytech adequately provides graduates with the broad backgrounds needed by industry, employers will look elsewhere, even out of the state of Georgia. When The Technical Institute began, graduates could expect 10 to 25 job offers for only two years of formal post-secondary education. For most students, having delayed entry into the job market due to World War II, such opportunities were welcome. While there may never be a return to such a wide-open job market, it will always be necessary for Southern Polytech to be sensitive to industry's needs and to adjust its programs accordingly.

The third area of focus is continual diversification of the university's program. In 1995 and 1996, biological science was added to the curriculum. Today,

³Since 1970, this has been a rapidly developing part of the school's program. In becoming a four-year school, this area saw the largest number of new faculty and new course development. In a sense, the current needs in this area continue a trend now three decades old.

there is also a strong need to add true engineering degrees alongside engineering technology. As the technological world has developed, more and narrower have become the variety of fields and levels of education. From the tradesman emerged the position of engineer. Then, particularly after World War II, an intermediate field, technician, arose. Meeting the need for such individuals was the original basis for developing the school now called Southern Polytech. During the 1960s, a finer distinction, engineering technologist, emerged. Such a person had the technical training and skills of the technician, plus the broader personal and academic skills afforded by a four-year education, including more depth in math and the sciences. In the 1990s, a still finer distinction has emerged between research engineering and applied engineering. Today, there are few, if any, technical universities in the United States which do not offer engineering (except, of course, Southern Polytech). The need to offer such courses of study will only intensify if the decline in demand for engineering technology graduates across the nation continues. Industries' needs and Southern Polytech's program are well-suited to prepare such "applied engineers" for Georgia and the South.

The change to university status has afforded significant opportunities which relate to both enrollment and diversification. As the term "university" implies, the scope of the school's programs and curricula have substantial room to broaden, even into the social science and humanities fields which have traditionally been bastions of the liberal arts.⁴ This broadening of the school's focus will, in turn, offer new opportunities for the school to develop new programs which will help to strengthen enrollments. However, the school must also be able to drive enrollment through its reputation and visibility. As a university, Southern Polytech can maintain and strengthen its strong reputation and enhance its visibility through such diversification. The challenge of diversification, however, is both internal - new programs and competing departments' needs and concerns - and external through genuine support by the state, financially and otherwise, to allow the school to be effective in its unique area.

Another challenge for the school relates to student quality. Legend had it, in the 1950s and 1960s, that when someone couldn't succeed at Georgia Tech, that person would come to Southern Tech. While on occasion such a situation may have occurred, this was not the norm. Students came to Southern Tech because of the quality and type of training it offered. This reason was perhaps most evident in the

⁴One example of this is the field of Technical and Professional Communication. But Physical Anthropology is increasingly using technical and scientific resources and equipment for analysis and study. Psychology is increasingly more involved with the Biological Sciences. Even language studies are becoming increasingly technical as computerized translators are under development.

discussions concerning separation. So strong had the quality of Southern Tech's graduates become that Georgia Tech's president would consider Southern Tech a competitor for money, students, placements, and industry support if the two schools were separated. Acting-Chancellor Crawford became personally familiar with the character and quality of the education at Southern Tech when his son matriculated at the school. Southern Tech did not offer, therefore, a poor-quality, second-class, pseudo-engineering education, nor does it now. The constant challenge has been to maintain the high quality of entering students. Elevation to university status can be expected to help in this inasmuch as better students tend to seek the diversity and experiences offered by universities.

Already under development has been a program urged upon the school since the early days of the Cheshier administration. This program is for Southern Polytech to be a capstone for certain graduates of vocational-technical schools. While the vocational-technical schools did not originally provide training of the sort offered by Southern Technical Institute, both Southern Tech and these schools have grown in the size and scope of their program. By the 1990s, some vocational-technical programs reached the level of training which the Regents' and Chancellor's office, among others, believe can effectively feed into a four-year degree program. Among all the University System schools, Southern Polytech is perhaps the most appropriate to offer the capstone for some of the stronger technical programs offered by these other schools. On the other hand, one of the more difficult challenges for the faculty and administration is to identify from the over 200 possible programs which ones are appropriate for association with a baccalaureatedegree program at Southern Polytech.⁵ An issue related to diversification and the vocational-technical school - Southern Polytech relationship is possible curriculum expansion. In addition, a different accrediting agency and a different state agency oversee the programs of the vocational-technical schools. To successfully be the capstone for vocational-technical programs clearly requires careful coordination in course and curriculum development, as well as selectivity of the programs involved, at both vocational-technical schools and at Southern Polytech.

With the explosion of information technologies in the 1990s, one of the fads in education is Distance Learning. The idea is to provide training to multiple small

⁵As indicated in the last chapter, doing this is a major reversal of policy for the school. Issues have included the nature of the degree, coursework, and accreditation concerns. As a capstone program at Southern Polytech, graduates from these other schools come with Associate degrees not always accredited by SACS. Their technical coursework is mostly complete so the degree they receive from Southern Polytech has to be in something other than technology. By administrative action, the program was initiated in December 1996, while the faculty continues to wrestle with refining the program to resolve the problematic issues.

groups located at remote sites. Until recently, this had only been possible through video lectures or a time delay/videotape method. But with development of communications and other technologies, such as the Internet, two-way, real-time classroom instruction to remote sites has become possible. Not only does this new technology challenge Southern Polytech to integrate it into the classroom, it challenges effective integration into the school's overall functioning. Distance Learning is still largely untested, and preliminary evaluations of existing attempts at offering such educational experiences are mixed. Nevertheless real-time communication can enable small groups of students at distant locations to communicate with the professor and other students, either in the host classroom or in small classrooms elsewhere while the class session is still underway.

Since Southern Polytech has a statewide mission, Distance Learning could enable the school to provide quality education to sites around the state effectively and efficiently. To do so, however, will involve numerous logistical challenges ranging from admissions and registration to quality control, funding, assessment, testing, grading, and scheduling. In addition, there is the issue of campus life for the students. Even for commuter students, there is some campus life available. But for students in a Distance Learning program, there may be little, if any, campus environment for them. Laboratory courses and those in which students are grouped together for learning or in-class presentations represent additional difficulties for Distance Learning methodology. The proliferation of technologies can be a great boon to the educational process when used effectively, but developing methods to utilize such technologies remains a challenge for both Southern Polytech and the rest of the State University System.

Southern Polytech will also continue to be challenged, as will the entire State University System, by the political process. Since before the founding of The Technical Institute, one of the primary struggles for this school has been with state officials. At times, the school has prospered under the guidance of Chancellors, Regents, and politicians who understood and supported its unique role in Georgia's educational framework. Too often, however, as Southern Tech, the school suffered with too-little-almost-too-late from the state and thereby was prevented from realizing the full potential the founders envisioned for it. As has been evident throughout much of the school's history, Southern Polytech's future and success are at least significantly in the hands of politicians representing the people and the state of Georgia. The best students and the best programs and enrollment potentials will prove nearly meaningless if the funds and facilities are not there to support them, and if the programs are not allowed to grow and develop. Furthermore, Southern Polytech does not seek support from the state in a vacuum.

Unlike the situation during its first years, when there were only a handful of schools, there are now 34 schools in the University System of Georgia. Each one has

its particular needs and can offer important justifications for why those needs should take precedence in funding and planning. There are also regional political considerations which enter into support decisions and which may have little or nothing to do with education. For example, in both rural and urban settings, a school requires a certain overhead just to operate, which generally means that on a proportional basis, a small University System school in a rural area requires more funding just to exist than does one in an urban area. There also are issues which sometimes affect the System and the state which arise out of changes in the national agenda.⁶ Further complicating this entire scenario is the problem within the University System itself of balancing large, research university programs with the needs of other institutions. Because programs in technical education are second only to medical schools in the need for funding in order to remain state-of-the-art and provide a high quality of training, this scenario is especially difficult for Southern Polytech, which is smaller than the research institutions and is not primarily research-oriented. This need imposes a proportionally higher-than-normal funding requirement while at the same time is not justifiable on the basis of research.

All of these factors are but part of the political challenge, however. Across America, there is an increasing insistence on achieving and maintaining high levels of quality in education. On the other hand, it will probably increasingly fall to the states, and ultimately to the private sector, to provide funding for this. It may be that in coming years Southern Polytech will have to rely increasingly on industry, alumni, and friends in order to maintain and enhance the quality of its program. Developing the necessary infrastructure, contacts, and methodology to do this will be another challenge for the school as it enters its second half-century.

One of the longest struggles which Southern Polytech has faced is that of identity. From the birth of the idea to create a technical institute, there has been confusion concerning the goals and values of the educational program offered by the school. To a significant degree, this parallels the difficulty the field of engineering technology has experienced in being understood. Initially, the Regents could not understand why Georgia Tech would even consider offering what was seemingly a second-rate program, especially when Georgia Tech was rushing headlong into becoming a major research university for engineering. In fact, only by distancing the technical institute plan from the main campus and the central academic activity of the school and by giving assurances of independent funding within a short time period

⁶For example, Affirmative Action policies have been an issue since the 1960s. During the 1970s, this was cited as the reason the Chancellor's office had deferred for 10 years consideration of the question of separation. Even during the 1990s, this issue continues to be at the forefront of concern and the national agenda.

was Georgia Tech's President Blake R. Van Leer even able to persuade the Regents to approve the idea at all. But industry at the time was crying for individuals with post-secondary education who possessed applied knowledge in the technical fields. To be sure, some graduates of Georgia Tech and similar research engineering programs also possessed such applied experience, usually because they had been avocationally interested in their chosen field even before they decided to pursue it as a career. Education at the applied level, whether in engineering, computer science, pure science, or related areas such as management and communications, has remained the niche in which Southern Polytech has functioned, built its reputation, and can be expected to continue to function.

The problem with applied education is that it "straddles the fence" between multiple disciplines. However, in an "age of information," the ability to do exactly this is becoming increasingly important both to employers and to career survival. To be sure, graduates must possess sufficient training and skills to function effectively in their chosen career area; but to be truly effective today requires some knowledge of other, related areas, in order to "integrate the parts into the whole." For this reason, Southern Polytech is poised to be able to continue to offer to industry graduates who can meet this need. The challenge for the school, therefore, at several levels, is to continue to recognize and have the freedom to provide this training.

Also related to identity has been Southern Polytech's visibility within the community. While in Dekalb County, Southern Technical Institute was a branch of Georgia Tech and was competing with such institutions as Emory University and Agnes Scott College for recognition. Despite valiant efforts both within industry and through the local media, school officials continued to struggle to publicize the school and its program. For a brief period during the early 1960s, the situation changed. The school was useful to the Governor at that time in promoting his interests and so found political favor, and with that, funding resources with which to strengthen its program while relocating to a permanent campus. By moving to Cobb County, the school also met the hopes and aspirations of many civic leaders in the county: to have a unit of the University System within the area. Subsequent creation of Kennesaw Junior College (now Kennesaw State University) brought an early end to this "Cinderella" period for Southern Polytech. Nevertheless, the two schools were frequently able to cooperate while care was taken to keep their programs from overlapping, and there was a difference in the kind of education each provided. Southern Technical Institute focused on a narrow, technical spectrum of disciplines and required one of the highest test score and grade-point average levels in the state for admission. Kennesaw offered broader curricular opportunities, including business, education, and the liberal arts. However, by the 1970s, enrollment at Kennesaw was reaching, and has long since surpassed that of Southern Technical Institute, while becoming the most visible post-secondary school in the county.

Without a major sports team, with a quality reputation primarily confined to industry, and with a relatively narrow student spectrum from which to draw, Southern Polytech has continued to struggle for visibility. The delay in becoming a four-year school and then subsisting for another decade under the shadow of Georgia Tech did not make the task easier; prospective students and eventually the greater community no longer thought of Southern Technical Institute as their institution. Though one of President Cheshier's highest priorities, as late as the mid-1990s many in Marietta and Cobb County still have not realized that the school is a four-year- and graduate degree-granting institution. Similarly, many are not aware that it is possible to study subjects other than engineering and technology at the school. Another of the challenges facing the school is to effectively make its presence and activity in the community known. Elevation to university status can certainly help this; consultants can recommend programs to enhance visibility; but it is necessary to use the opportunities available to the school efficiently and to continue to work and excel in maintaining a strong reputation and expanding into new areas of engineering and technology.

During its first 50 years, as The Technical Institute, Southern Technical Institute, Southern College of Technology, and now Southern Polytechnic State University, the school has continued to grow and rise to its challenges. Whether it be the needs of industry, changes within professions, or internal and political challenges, these have become opportunities for the school to excel and grow stronger. When necessary, programs have been dropped or added, policies changed, and the organizational structure reshuffled. As with any institution, there have been ups and downs, some painful moments, and some crowning successes. Perhaps what makes an institution, after everything else, is its people and their relationships: administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. When all of these have cooperated together to deal with a problem besetting the school, they have been immensely successful, even in the face of significant political opposition. As the school diversifies, grows, and develops more fully into a university, its biggest challenge will perhaps be to develop and maintain in a good spirit the relationships between the parts. To do so will likely be Southern Polytech's crowning achievement.

Appendix

Important Dates in The History of Southern Polytechnic State University

October 8, 1947	Georgia Tech authorized to begin development of a technical institute at Chamblee, Georgia; L. V. Johnson the Director
March 24, 1948	The Technical Institute officially opens with 116 students and 10 faculty
May 12, 1949	Name changed to Southern Technical Institute
September 6, 1949	First graduation; 55 students receive certificates
October 28, 1949	Accredited by the ECPD
June 11, 1958	Move to Cobb County authorized; 1195 students and 50 full-time faculty
July 1, 1959	L. V. Johnson named Director, Engineering Extension Division Hoyt McClure named Acting-Director (later appointed Director)
September 1961	Relocation to the Cobb County campus; 1340 students
Academic year 1966	First Bathtub Race held
July 1, 1970	Southern Tech designated a senior college (i.e., four-year college) within the State University System; Walter O. Carlson, Dean
June 12, 1971	First Baccalaureate degrees awarded
July 1, 1980	Southern Tech independent of Georgia Tech; Walter O. Carlson, Acting-President

September 1, 1980	Stephen R. Cheshier named first President of Southern Tech
October 1985	First Master's degree program begun, in Technical Management
Fall Quarter 1986	Reorganization into the Schools of Arts and Sciences, Management, and Technology
October 1, 1986	Name changed to Southern College of Technology
June 11, 1988	First Master's degrees awarded Fall Quarter 1989 School of Architecture created; 4026 students enrolled
July 9, 1996	Name changed to Southern Polytechnic State University
July 1, 1997	Daniel Papp named Interim-President

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