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A Draft History of the State University of New York

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"The University of the State of New York"

1784-1862

Perhaps today in American higher education there is no greater misnomer than the University of the State of New York. Most observers are baffled by the incongruity of there existing both this institution and the State University of New York. A notable difference, of course, is one of time, the former established in 1784, the latter created in 1948. A more profound contrast, however is that the University of the State was born an elitist institution, and State University was, conversely, built as the people's institution of higher learning, which in due course would become the largest public university in the world. The disparity of elite and common would have severe consequences far into the twentieth century. In fact the profound relationships of the two institutions is such as to here warrant a brief explanation of the beginnings of the University of the State of New York.

When founded in 1784, the University of the State of New York represented in no sense a university as we understand the term today. It was basically a department of state government intended "to create a complete system of education" in the state -- to charter and regulate secondary and higher educational institutions. (Universities) is Latin for guild, a term which French salons in the 1780s applied to state centralization of education. Leaders of the American Revolution who were students

of French politics, such as Franklin, Jefferson and John Jay of New York exported the term to America. It was probably no accident that the University of the State of New York was created in 1784, the year John Jay returned from Paris.)¹

Of course there is an inverse irony in New York elitists coopting a French revolutionary idea. The conception of the University of the State of New York apparently began democratically enough. Governor George Clinton, an anti-Federalist to be (and presumably a Jeffersonian advocate of public and secular education) in 1782 urged the legislature to institute a system of schools and seminaries, and, in 1784 a bill was introduced in the legislature "for establishing a University within the state" to address the educational needs of New York. But, significantly, the down-state aristocratic conservatives -- who looked askance upon the radical idea of universalizing education -- amended the bill to principally educate their own youth. It did so by providing that the University of the State be "invested with all the former rights and privileges of King's (thereafter to be known as Columbia) College and ... , in addition, [be] granted the power to found and endow schools and colleges in all parts of the state and to hold them subject to its direction and visitation."²

However, as Charles Beatty Alexander points out in the most concise statement of this subject, the aristocratic take-over by the Regents of the University was not to last. For one thing, the rising popular element in the state soon saw through the rouse; and secondly, Columbia College wanted to govern itself and not be controlled by the Board of Regents, the

administrative body of the University of the State of New York. So, in 1787 the legislature gave the Regents of the University the broad function of incorporating and appraising colleges and academies.³ Thus, the "new" Board of Regents has ever since engaged in setting standards for academies and colleges in the State of New York. (Lest one think that setting standards precluded control they should be reminded that in 1977 the Regents closed the history department's Ph.D. program at the State University of New York in Albany.)⁴

While the Regents of the University of the State had authority to "visit" all educational institutions the board soon realized the need for an enhanced "popular" education of younger children and in 1787 appointed a committee to address the matter. The committee recommended that "erecting public schools for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic is an object of very great importance, which ought not to be left to the discretion of private men, but be promoted by public authority." In due course, therefore, nearly a decade later, the legislature appropriated \$50,000 per annum for five years to partially subsidize the maintenance of common schools "in the several cities and towns" where children "... shall be instructed in the English language or be taught grammar, arithmetic, mathematics, and such branches of knowledge as are most useful and necessary to complete a good English education". Thus began the New York public school system, although the state support was interrupted from 1800 until the year 1805 when the legislature placed the interest from the sale of 500,000 acres of state lands into a permanent school fund; and shortly afterward enhanced the endowment with income from lotteries and

New York bank stock.⁵

While the Regents of the University in 1787 had initiated the common school movement, its interest was basically, as it had been initially, higher education (and private higher education at that). Soon it became obvious that the common school movement required firmer administration of the state school fund than was being effected by the Regents. In 1812 the legislature transferred much of their administrative charge of elementary education to a State Superintendent of Common Schools. For nearly a century, until 1904, a Common Schools head and the Regents would be largely independent -- the former administering the public elementary, and subsequently, secondary schools; the latter the private institutions and all higher education, public and private. In a space of a few years after 1812 the schools of the state mushroomed into 6,000 public school districts, and elementary education of over 300,000 children. The next several decades saw various changes in Common School headships; Secretaries of State served as the State School head from 1821 until 1854. In the latter year the legislature established a Department of Public Instruction to oversee the state funding and administration of the public schools.⁶

Understandably the massive influx of students into the common schools required a proportionate increase of teachers. Teacher training was practically non-existent. Frequently one qualified to teach if only a "jump" (a year or two) ahead of the students -- and if of "good moral character". Evolving secondary institutions gradually became, in effect teacher

training schools. Many of their teachers took on teacher training duties in addition to their regular teaching service. Most such secondary schools were private academies established by local initiative and were chartered by the Board of Regents. When so founded they qualified for state aid. As a consequence probably no state in the nation witnessed the survival of private academies as long as did the State of New York, although by an act of 1853 public school districts were permitted to conduct some secondary school courses under the title of "academic departments". When, eventually public high schools grew out of some common school systems, the question of whether their supervision should be by the Department of Public Institution or the Board of Regents was hotly and unsatisfactorily contested for decades -- until 1904.⁷

Governor DeWitt Clinton as early as 1826 recognized the need for better teacher training and called for the establishment of a special "seminary" to train teachers. Instead the legislature commissioned the Regents to allot \$3,200 to each of eight academies for purposes of enhancing their teacher training programs. When in 1844 a special seminary, called a state normal school, was centered in Albany, teacher training subsidies to academies were rescinded, although the subsidies were renewed five years later. Pressures grew for the Regents of the University to undertake the development of a sufficient number of "normal schools" to provide creditably trained teachers for the burgeoning public school population in the State. The Regents, however, became very cautious about charting institutions of "higher learning" -- academies, normal

school, or colleges. Indeed they so severely limited the licensing of colleges that for some decades prior to mid-century, the legislature undertook the task, returning the responsibility to the University of the State after the Civil War.⁸

"The Morrill Act and Public Higher Education in New York"
1862 - 1904

When the idea and origin of state university in America is addressed one invariably looks to Jefferson's University of Virginia and to the great state universities of the mid-West. When so doing a paradox emerges, not unlike that enigma of New York aristocrats coopting a French revolutionary concept in creating the University of the State of New York. Jefferson, "an aristocrat to his finger tips" was eclectic and "rational" enough to advocate state education of an "aristocracy of virtue and talent, which nature has wisely provided for the interests of society, and scattered with equal hand through all its conditions". The great mid-Western state universities reflected less the caution of the Eastern college founders and showed more the leveling spirit of the frontier. The "intellectually and ethically raw" Andrew Jackson was more their patron than was Jefferson. The State of Indiana, for example, reflected early the earnest frontier egalitarianism when, in 1816, its constitution announced that the General Assembly shall provide education at all levels "... from township schools to State University, wherein tuition shall be gratis, and equally open to all."⁹

New York was rather a microcosm of the nation -- a mix of East and West. The Regents of the University, for all of its aristocratic history, did reflect the French idea of state responsibility for higher education. At the turn of this century, Charles F. Thuring in his pioneering work, A History of

Higher Education in America noted: "The Regents of the University of the State of New York have proved themselves more solicitous to provide the proper financial and other support for a college ... than the governors of the educational interest of any other Commonwealth." For example, valiant attempts in the 1780s and 90s were made to find in New York a "commodious sight" for a college to educate "men of learning to fill office of church and state." Thus, the Regents, in 1794 chartered, on its frontier, in Schenectady, Union College. The college, by place and title, reflected Regents vigorous concern for higher education in the state -- a "commodious sight" and a "joining together all the sects in common interest for the common good."¹⁰ As noted, when the Regents limited the chartering of colleges the legislature proceeded to do so.

There is no more stunning illustration of the mix of Eastern staidness and Western egalitarianism than the circumstance in New York which led to the State's chartering of Cornell University. It's creation is a long story but not to be lost here is its origin in three fledgling colleges chartered to meet the needs of New Yorkers as they moved West on their own frontier. Note the names and places: People's College in Havana, just south of Watkins Glen; the New York Central College, near Cortland, twenty-five miles north east of Ithaca; the New York State Agricultural College, in Ovid, twenty-five miles northwest of Ithaca. The very names reflect the Western interests of common people and their endeavors -- laboring and farming. It's beyond the purview of this essay to recount state and local public subscriptions to their support. The three

colleges are particularly important to this story because they are the beginnings of New York's first "state college", Cornell, which, in 1865 was incorporated as a University on condition "to receive annually one student from each Assembly district ... and ... give them instruction in any or all the prescribed branches of study ... free of any tuition free."¹¹

The principal stimulus to state university education in the nation was the passage of the Morrill Land Grant Act in 1862. Consistent with the drive to provide higher education to the laborers and farmers of the nation it gave to each state 30,000 acres of land per congressman for the purpose of endowing at least one mechanical and agricultural college. Little wonder the act is variously described as both "the most important piece of agricultural legislation in American history" and the principal catalyst for mass higher education in the nation. And New York, with more congressmen than any other state, was allotted 989,920 acres of land, nearly 10 percent of the total of the land-grants of the Morrill Act. States with insufficient federal land, like New York, were given land scrip to purchase acreage in undeveloped frontier regions. In the spirit of the law, states in various ways offered tuition free education to its agricultural and mechanical colleges -- Connecticut gave gratuitous instruction to students attending the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale College; Rhode Island bestowed its land scrip upon Brown University, limiting the number of tuition free students to the amount of the state's grant; states like Iowa and Michigan, which had already provided free education to all of its students, used the grants-in-aid to

enhance their state universities.¹²

New York's share was assigned by the Regents in 1863 to People's College with a general provision that it receive students from every county, the clear implication being that, like the state universities at Iowa and Michigan, all students would be admitted free of charge. Unfortunately, People's College, for various reasons, including a paralytic stroke of its principal catalyst and benefactor, Charles Cook, could not meet the several requirements laid down by the legislature. With the possibility of the legislature rescinding the Morrill allotment to People's College, there ensued a scramble for New York's share, particularly between supporters at People's College and the New York State Agricultural College at Ovid. Then there entered into this picture New York State Senator Ezra Cornell, philanthropist and President of the New York State Agricultural Society, who suggested that the profits from the land-script by divided between the two institutions. However, State Senator Andrew D. White, Chairman of the Literature Committee, (the committee principally responsible for education in the Senate) refused to permit a division of the funds. In due course Senators Cornell and White decided the fate of the fund.¹³

It does, of course, an injustice, even in a draft history such as this, to, in one paragraph, explain away the creation of Cornell University as the agriculture college of the State of New York. In short Ezra Cornell, an Ithaca inventor and industrialist who made a fortune in Western Union telegraph development, and the influential Andrew White established such a rapport that in 1865 they brought the New York Morrill fund to a

newly founded Cornell University. A magnificent personal gift by Ezra Cornell of \$500,000 to the founding of the new university undoubtedly influenced the State legislature in its chartering of Cornell on April 27, 1865. It should be noted that the Regents of the State were scrupulous in their assurance that People's University could not fulfill the requirements originally imposed for receipt of the land-grant funds; and that a newly created Cornell University would be able to do so. It should also be noted that the Regents and the legislature accepted a charter for the new university which seemingly differed from the agricultural and mechanical education intent of the Morrill Act. The charter prescribed, very importantly, that " ... such other branches of science and knowledge may be embraced in the plan of instruction and investigation pertaining to the university as the trustees may deem useful and proper." It has already been noted that Cornell University's charter varied from the People's Charter in that free tuition at the Ithaca institution would be limited to one student from each county in the state -- at that a considerable number of college students for that day. Thus, was born the land-grant "college" of the State of New York, so emersed, however, within the confines of Cornell's private higher education as to have grave implications for the future development of public higher education in the state. Cornell's expansion into a great private University, (with its public appendages of agriculture and subsequently of Home Economics, Veterinary Medicine, and Industrial and Labor Relations) would perpetuate the bifurcation of private and public higher education in the state, to the

frequent disadvantage to the latter which spawned it. Although privileged with land-grant and additional state financing, such public support to Cornell would soon be minimal as compared to private financing by high tuitions paid by most of its students and by massive private endowments. Indeed, Cornell along with Columbia would become a harbinger of private education in the State. Of course, as with Columbia, Cornell with its distinguished and independent faculty would offer much to the state and the nation.¹⁴

Little wonder the State University of New York, when at last created in the mid-20th Century, would have to struggle so mightily to attempt to achieve the stature of other great mid-Western universities which had started so magnificently a century previously. What higher education in New York became has been attributed largely to the private, and not the public domain.

The State University of New York in the mid-20th Century would be shaped, not by a great Morrill endowed university, but by the normal schools chartered almost simultaneously to that of Cornell University. Of course, the Regents and the legislature would charter and support numerous other academies and colleges, some like Hamilton College, Hartwick Seminary, Colgate Theological Seminary; and, as noted, a number of academies which were akin to high schools and which served as a training ground for common school teachers. In 1855 the Regents allocated some \$18,000 to over eighty academies with teacher training courses.¹⁵ Criticism ensued. Emphasis on classics in the academies seemed a waste and to be certainly unsuitable to

teacher training. Of course, as noted, the state had created at Albany one normal school in 1844. Although it seemingly limped along it fulfilled a need and became permanent by legislative action in 1848.¹⁶

To say that 19th century normal schools in the nation lacked the German like scientific methodologies imported into institutions like Cornell is not to say that all normal schools were "provincial" in comparison. Edward Sheldon of Oswego (a locally funded normal school) was brilliant in effecting Pestalozzi's ideas of individuality of youngster -- the need to learn by sensory experiences and not by rote. Sheldon attracted national attention with his "object methodology" and sophisticated remedial programs in academic subjects. Little wonder the Regents and the state chartered its second normal school there, in 1863. It appropriated \$6,000 to the school on condition that it accept one student from each county in the State. So profound was the "Oswego Movement" that President John W. Cook, of the State Normal School, Normal, Illinois declared: "The Educational historian who overlooks the Oswego Movement makes a grave omission. It was germinal in America as it has been Europe. It is the happy fortune of its great promoter to survive its vindication." Sheldon observed with pride state legislative action to provide for four more normal schools. They received \$12,000 annually from the Common School Fund. The new institutions chartered in 1870 were located at Brockport, Fredonia, Cortland, and Potsdam, to be followed shortly by the chartering of normal schools at Buffalo, Geneseo, New Paltz and Oneonta.¹⁷

Normal schools criss-crossing the State might have been strong building blocks to the next century's State University. Pestalozzi's ideas were not the only substance. The Herbartian Movement in education also prepared students to be teachers of citizenship also, the philosophers John Dewey and William James and at times taught the theories of structuralism, functionalism, behaviorism and Gestalt. More often than not, however, the normal schools in the state were niches between the grammar schools and colleges. Normal school students were little advanced beyond the elementary grades. As teachers they were often ill equipped to address the issues of the rising educational profession. Productive dialogue on educational matters was left to institutions like Teacher's College of Columbia University.¹⁸ Even Cornell wanted to raise up the "new educational" discourse in an advanced School of Pedagogy but came to prefer state largess for its other proposed new programs.¹⁹

The state normal schools struggled with Pestalozzian and Herbartian ideas. But, generally they became emersed in elementary subject matter, teaching "hints", some theoretical principles of teaching, and a smattering of methodology. Albany, close at hand to the legislature and to the Regents seemed to have a better handle on its normal school's direction, although at times even it was hard to perceive.²⁰

A central problem for the normal schools was determining the responsibility for their direction. For nearly a half a century the Regents of the State University and the Superintendent of Public instruction bickered -- the Regents viewed its charge as not only the academies and the colleges but

the high schools as well. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, assumed responsibility for common school education, and argued logically enough, for regulating the training of its teachers, either in the academies or the normal schools. Consequently, the normal schools were in limbo, frequently subject to the whims of local jurisdictions. Funding decreased and the schools came to be characterized as "notoriously low" in quality. Students were ill prepared, as evidenced by much needed remedial work in elementary subjects. Few faculty members had even baccalaureate degrees.²¹

Then in 1886 appeared Andrew Sloan Draper as Superintendent of Public Instruction. He was intelligent and forceful and successfully weaned teacher training away from the Regents. Draper brought efficiency to teacher training, but, on his terms. Normal schools would be essentially training schools. Private academies would be encouraged to introduce teacher training classes. Summer teacher service institutes would be introduced. And, by Draper's edict, there would be no additional normal schools.

A significant concern of Superintendent Draper and of his two successors was that normal schools were becoming the people's colleges of the State. They resented the fact that less than half normal school students were interested in the teacher preparation programs. Under their control of normal schools, teach training aspects would be emphasized. In this way private academies and colleges would feel less threatened by publically supported schools of "higher education."²²

In the spirit of the People's College demise the common

interests of the Department of Public Instruction and the Board of Regents centered on assurances that normal schools would not become people's colleges. Thus, in 1904, the Regents and the Superintendent closed ranks and effected a unification.

"Unification of the Regents and the State Education Department"
1904-1946

The Regents of the University and the State legislature oversaw the mushrooming of New York's higher education in the 19th century; and in various ways, with frequent state financial support. It is to the credit of both that few states matched New York's institutions of higher learning, for physical plant and quality. But, the skewing favored the private over public interests, consistent with the Regents' origin -- to save King's College for the affluent youth of the state; and in accord with the dispensing of the Morrill land-grant share to what became a bulwark of private education, Cornell University. As the state entered the 20th Century in the midst of the great Progressive Reform Era public higher education might still have been salvaged for less privileged youth. The seeds of intent were there, as manifested by the People's College charter of an earlier decade; and by the City of New York striving mightily to educate its poor in a City College. In fact, New York's Progress Era (1901-1917) showed sophistication in so many matters that one wonders how it failed to provide better public higher education. The answer was in large part the "private" bent of the Regents. The Department of Public Instruction in the 80's and the 90's had complained that a high percentage of normal school students had no intention of teaching. Of course, the 1904 unification of the Regents and the Department of Public Instruction would not bode well for public higher education in the state, especially with the return of Andrew Sloan Draper in 1904 as the

head of the State Education Department.²³

Under the Unification Act of 1904 the Regents and the State Education Department would establish a harmonious division of labor. By the Act the Regents would retain jurisdiction over colleges and universities; and the Superintendent of Public Instruction (to be hereafter called Commissioner) would have supervision of elementary and secondary education. Shortly thereafter, the law was amended to make the Regents a division of the State Education Department and the Commissioner the President of the University of the State of New York. Given Draper's reticence about expanding public higher education (in 1889 he had favored teacher training classes in private academies over additional normal schools) and his insistence that normal schools avoid subject matter courses, one can perceive an unfortunate legacy on which to ultimately build a State University -- both in terms of quantity and quality of higher education units.²⁴

Superintendent of Public Instruction Draper's accomplishments on behalf of teacher-training in New York were considerable. He professionalized the State's oversight of its schools, improved considerably the syllabi and curriculum of both elementary and secondary schools, established a State retirement system, and moved the State Normal School in Albany in the direction of becoming a superior normal school (so good that in the post World War II years serious students would clamor to get in even though they were only nominally interested in teaching).²⁵

Commissioner Draper accelerated the reorganization of the

normal schools by upgrading their courses, and raising entrance requirements. The new program was a two year curriculum and would last until the early 1920s. Its emphasis was essentially the teaching of method with such appropriate courses as psychology, principles of education, penmanship, school economy. A prophetic weakness, to be perceived only later, yet a weak foundation for a future State University, was the firm intent to have the normal schools eliminate an academic curriculum. In 1909 the Commissioner would proudly announce that the normal schools had at last become professional training institutions. Subject matter courses were largely eliminated. Foretelling a future need, the normal schools, once multi-purpose institutions which helped to educate the state's underprivileged youth, became the single purpose teacher training schools. Draper wanted them to be. Thereafter the normal schools would never achieve the numbers of students they enrolled at the turn of the century.²⁶

There was, of course, an explosive growth in secondary education in the state between 1895 and 1910, the high schools increasing from 373 to 740. Only the Albany Normal School, however, trained secondary teachers. The other normal schools were limited to the training of elementary teachers. Three decades later the normal schools would have to be converted into teacher's college to prepare secondary teachers, a difficult transition given their long "training" emphasis with little "academic" attention. Their late entry into the secondary education training field (with some academic concentration) made them a precarious building base for the future State University.²⁷

The Department of Public Instruction had taken pride in recasting the State Normal School at Albany into college. It developed an English and Classical program of two years each, and a supplementary two year methodology course which required such courses as Mental Physiology, Old Greek Education, Mental Science, and a thesis. The prior English and Classical programs were a mix of methodology and academic courses, with increasing emphasis on the former. Completion of the English and Classical programs (and the methodology) led respectively to Bachelor and Master of Pedagogy.²⁸

The Department and the Regents subsequently modified the program for college and university graduates who wanted to prepare to teach in the Secondary schools. It increased the Albany College program to four years and recognized the need for "thorough and comprehensive scholarship" in academic subjects.²⁹

Commissioner Draper was pleased with the development of the State Normal College at Albany and, in 1910, included it in a blueprint of "free" public higher education in the state, along with the City College of New York and the Normal College of the City of New York (subsequently Hunter College). A recent student of Draper's hopeful announcement to "swing college doors more freely to the youth of the state" notes that the declaration was not, however, a call for a State University. Indeed, consistent with his really private bent toward private higher education -- and that of the Regents for whom he now spoke -- the Commissioner observed that higher education in the state had "so far matured" as to put a State University beyond the pale. Revealingly, Draper concluded: " ... neither the

people of the State, the other high institutions of higher learning in the State, nor the weight of opinion and feeling at Cornell" would support converting that land-grant receiving institution into the State University of New York. The Commissioner did suggest that the University of the State of New York (as opposed to State University) secure state funding for transforming universities in Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse into city universities -- with the assumption of tuition of "selected" students. With a further qualification, Draper concluded: " ... it ought to be fundamental ... that all who want to ... [attend college] shall not be prevented from doing so by reason of tuition charges which they can not assume." Understandably, the Association of Colleges and Universities of the State of New York, on February 2, 1910 suggested an alternative: a program of \$100.00 per year State scholarships to 3,000 qualified students to attend a private college or university of their choice. Such a "Regents Scholarship" program was effected three years later, although the same legislature denied desperately needed salary increases for state normal school's faculty. After a sincere struggle Commissioner Draper finally secured a faculty salary increase, only to have Governor John Dix veto it.³⁰

The Albany Normal College fared increasingly better than the State's normal school -- in almost all regards. Perhaps it did so because it, of all the public state training institutions, was more closely watched by the Board of Regents. In 1914 it became the New York State College for Teachers. It secured more dormitories and by the time of the founding of the

State University in 1948 had a fairly strong reputation for both undergraduate and graduate education. The Buffalo State Normal School became a State College for Teachers in 1927, also offering bachelor's and master's degrees. The other normal schools followed suit in the thirties and forties. The New York State College for Teachers at Albany was preeminent, and as the only state college with a secondary program it alone drew students from across the state. Although by the late 1940s and the Fifties it attracted national attention as the flagship of the new State University, it was hardly the equivalent in any aspects to the Big Ten State Universities. Albany, however, had a remarkably high quality of students, faculty, curriculum, and physical plant.³¹ But, it was the only one so qualified. While the State Education Department had professionalized, centralized and controlled teacher training institutions, the teachers colleges suffered a bureaucratic prejudice which the College at Albany, and to a lesser degree, Buffalo avoided. Could a State University ultimately be built on such underpinnings?³²

"The Founding of the State University of New York"
1946-1952

Lest one think that the destiny of an institution, such as higher education, is not mightily affected by its history -- and more so depending upon the length of time -- look at New York. It boggles the mind to realize that the private interests of King's College (later Columbia University), so important to the creation of the Regents in 1784, would, in the 1940s, use again the Regents in its own behalf. An analysis of how it was so might caution players on the higher education scene -- the State University of New York for our purposes -- to be ever conscious of the past's impact.

The struggle between the private and public interests early in the twentieth century was one largely between Nicholas Murray Butler, the President of Columbia University, and the Jewish and other youth of New York City, who desperately wanted higher education. Since the turn of the Century it became increasingly apparent that New York University and the City College of New York could not absorb the children of the New Immigration. Brooklyn representatives in the State Legislature introduced bills for a university in their borough. But Butler feared for Columbia the competition of such a university. He used his Republican Party and educational influence with the Regents and the Governor to have the bills vetoed. When some bright Brooklyn youths did get admitted to Columbia in expanding numbers Butler became annoyed that "fully half of ... [them] were 'undesirables' ... [who conformed] much more closely with the type of student attending the College of the City of new

York than with our type of boy."³³

As demand for college admission increased following the first World War, Columbia made access to it more difficult, as did other institutions. The admission situation was compounded by reluctance by other states to accommodate New York students. There then began in New York an earnest demand for a State University to provide graduate, professional as well as undergraduate education. The Regents, the State Education Department, Columbia University, and many other private institutions of course, ignored the demand. But, something had to be done. Butler saw to it that Columbia set up a satellite unit, Seth Low Junior College, in Brooklyn. He even considered having Columbia purchase Long Island University, but when Brooklyn College, a new four-year municipal college was set up Butler gave up the idea of the Long Island purchase, and closed Seth Low College.³⁴

The creation of Brooklyn College far from met the demands of New York City youths for a college education. Thus, there were continuing calls for a State University throughout the twenties and thirties. The Regents in the late thirties commenced a study of the need. It's report concluded: "New York is adequately supplied with private colleges, universities and public and private professional schools though it does not have a State University." The author of the report, Luther Gulick, recognized that some "youth [who] qualified [for admission] ... are now deterred from advanced education for economic and other reasons."³⁵

The ever increasing demand for a higher education,

especially after World War II, made the continuing lack of concern of Columbia's Butler and the Regents inconscionable. Harold Wechsler, in his provocative work, The Qualified Student (1977) notes the relationship of the recent Holocaust to the greater sensitivity of New York Jewish youth, not only to lack of higher education facilities, but to the rank discriminatory admission policies of most of the existing institutions. The American Jewish Congress specifically charged Columbia with discriminatory policies. By now, Nicholas Murray Butler had retired his University presidency, and other voices, somewhat more adaptable to the times, spoke for Columbia. The Dean of the University's Teacher College Hollis L. Caswell severely chided the state exclaiming, "New York State, through a long-term policy of reliance on private support of higher education, has achieved a position in this field far below that of which she is capable, and below that of her best self interest." Although Columbia's new president, Frank Fackenthal, continued to praise private education he, unlike Butler, would not use his office to oppose the state providing public higher education facilities. He might have come to see the creation of the State University as a blessing in disguise. Dean Caswell suggested to him that it might provide Columbia "greater freedom to be selective in the objectives we emphasize and the students we accept." Fackenthal was adamant, however, in insisting that the State not interfere with Columbia University's admission policies.³⁶

But, it was not for Fackenthal to lightly say he would brook no interference. There were too many public forums questioning Columbia University's admission policy, many

inspired by the American Jewish Congress. The Congress itself charged the New York City Tax Commission with granting Columbia a tax exemption even though the University discriminated. The State Supreme Court threw out the case, stating that only alleged victims of discrimination could petition the Court. Then the New York City Council investigated and verified the American Jewish Congress charge with a finding of "a constant and precise decline in Jewish boys and girls being admitted to Columbia University ['s Medical School.]" Following that, the Mayor's Committee on Unity embarrassed the University with a staff report leaked to the New York Times which quoted Columbia College Dean Harry Carman as saying that although the Brooklyn students were qualified for admission to Columbia, geographical distribution of students was justifiable. (In light of the Holocaust one of the staff members "thought that since the colleges set the moral tone and climate for the nation discrimination on the campus [Columbia] might lead to further discrimination elsewhere.") Columbia University was relieved that it was not mentioned by name when the Mayor's Committee on Unity reported the existence of quota systems in the State's higher education institutions. The Committee recommended that the Board of Regents take appropriate action.³⁷

Because New York Constitution and law, which prohibited such discriminations, was ineffective, the legislature in 1946 drafted an Austin-Mahoney Fair Educational Practices Bill. The bill would specifically disallow quota admission patterns and would exempt only religious institutions. Columbia's leadership seathed at having the American Jewish Congress defining "the purposes and functions of education and educational

institutions." (The University still believed that there were grounds other than intellectual ability and moral character for admission.) The University opposed the bill behind the scenes, attempting to enlist the support of conservative Jewish organizations and the Association of Colleges and Universities of the State of New York.³⁸

The proponents of the Fair Educational Practices bill, particularly given the American Jewish Congress' shrewd support, were on the brink of getting the legislation when the City's Roman Catholic Archbishop Robert McIntyre announced his opposition. Apparently Columbia's attorneys convinced the Catholic hierarchy that the exemption of sectarian institutions was limited in that their non-Catholic students and faculty would not be exempt from the law. By now, however, the Austin-Mahoney bill faded. The legislature and the state turned their attention to Governor Thomas Dewey and his Commission on the Need for a State University.³⁹

The principal mission of the newly appointed Commission on the Need for a State University was, of course, principally that, and not the problem of racial and religious discrimination in New York higher education. The Commission did, however, appoint a sub-committee to address the discrimination matter, and its findings became very pertinent to the founding of the State University. Three staff reports demonstrated that Jewish students, upstate and downstate, experienced admission discrimination in "first-choice colleges; the paucity of black students being admitted to colleges was principally explained by their low economic status; that sixteen institutions [variously

Catholic, Protestant, non-sectarian] restricted enrollment based on race or creed." An important finding confirmed what had been long surmised; that admission to medical school was particularly difficult for many candidates.⁴⁰

As Governor Dewey conjured these findings and others, the confirmation of racial discrimination became increasingly significant -- perhaps absolutely so -- in his decision regarding the establishment of the State University.

Discrimination aside, although haunting the study of the need of a State University, Governor Dewey, in his annual appearance before the legislature on January 9, 1946 addressed higher education in terms of the needs of the returning Veterans. Specifically he noted that in 1944 and 1945 the state had established 2,400 scholarships for Veterans at \$350.00 annually. He asked that 1,200 more such scholarships be established in 1946; and he presumed that the same additional number would be requested in 1947. The governor then made an important general statement about higher education:

"In piecemeal fashion the state has been adding tuition-free colleges to private universities [such as the Forestry at Syracuse University]. We should examine the need for a State University including professional schools in order to equalize educational opportunities throughout the state and to provide larger educational plants required by a larger population."⁴¹

The governor's higher education problems were far more complex than he implied in his message to the legislature. Of the Veterans returning to New York it was estimated that 250,000 would seek further schooling, of which 100,000 would pursue college education. Simultaneous to the governor's statement to

the legislature the Democratic "Program [of] Bills" called for the creation of a State University to the amount of fifty million dollars. At the same time the private colleges and universities and the governor were culminating long deliberations which resulted in the formation of the Associated Colleges of Upper New York (ACUNY).⁴²

ACUNY was a hybrid institution of four two-year colleges, created and financed by state legislation on April 4, 1946, presided over by a board of trustees which has made up of private college and university presidents in the state, including several from downstate. The four units of ACUNY were Sampson College, located at the former naval base on Lake Seneca; Mohawk College located in the building of the former Rhoads General Hospital near Ithaca; the Middletown Collegiate Center, of afternoon and evening collegiate classes held in Middletown High School; and Champlain College, located in Plattsburg military barracks. It was ingeniously conceived as a temporary solution to the expected invasion of 100,000 veterans. The Association of Colleges and Universities of the State of New York assured the governor that the private institutions could absorb 60,000 of the Veterans; extension programs at their private colleges and universities could take 10,000 Veterans; and approximately 10,000 of the returning would be enrolled in ACUNY. In regard to the new "Associated Colleges" Chancellor Tolley of Syracuse University seemed to speak for the private institutions in the State when he wrote to Commissioner of Education George D. Stoddard: "We ought to guard against the danger of temporary agencies becoming permanent institutions. We do not want an embryo of a state university ... which would

be difficult to liquidate."⁴³

To meet the long-term higher education needs of the State Governor Dewey in 1946 seemingly had two alternatives: either the state should continue, at increased levels, various forms of state subsidies to private colleges and universities, or develop public institutions of higher education in the form of a state university with branches located around the state (or possibly a conglomerate of public two and four year colleges).⁴⁴

To give the governor pause to digest, ponder and react to the gamete of ideas and pressures regarding higher education -- from the Regents, the private institutions, the Democratic Party, and aggrieved ethnic groups -- he, on February 4, 1946 suggested to the legislature that it create

" ... a commission to be representative of the legislature, the state administration, educators, and of the people generally, and that this group be directed and empowered to assemble the views of all interested persons, procure all the data that is necessary within and without the state, make such plans, analyses and studies as are necessary and that it be provided with ample funds to accomplish its purposes. Such commission will examine all the issues, ascertain all the divergent views, and give hearing to all interested persons, to the end that we will have a sound evaluation of our system of higher education."⁴⁵

Reaction to the governor's plan varied, displaying the social and political contours of the state's past. Many Regents of course, opposed the thought of a state university, rooted as they were in their 1784 founding to save King's College; in their diversion of the Morrill land-grant to a private Cornell University; and in their turn-of-the-Century insistence that normal schools preclude any youth not desiring to teach. Now the Regents wanted to limit any public higher education to perhaps a

smattering of two-year trade institutes. Conversely, when Assembly Democrat Leader Irwin Sterngut exclaimed: "We don't need any more studies ... We know the [higher education] situation was rotten,"⁴⁶ he reflected those elements in the state who in the beginning had fought the formation of the Regents by Kings College benefactors; had supported the granting of Land-Grant funds to "People's College"; favored normal schools giving education to the states poor; and, in the twentieth century, demanded, for ethnic and economic reasons, a State University.

Dewey's idea of appointing a commission was not just a stall to avoid siding with "privately" oriented upstate Republicans or the "public" advocates of the downstate Democratic Party. Although conservative on economic matters Dewey's long New York City political experience had exposed him to the conditions and needs of the mass of people. The governor's political savvy seemed to lead him above party, as clearly shown by the make-up of the Temporary Commission to Study the Need for a State University which he appointed on July 14, 1946. Its eminent chairman, Owen D. Young, made the point: "there is not now and there will be no politics in the commission appointed by the Governor to study the need for a State University ... The Governor and I have discussed this subject [our plan of operation] and as a former member of the Board of Regents, I guess I have some background on the problems involved." The story of the Commission's deliberations and its ultimate report confirm the Chairman Young's determination to chair the Commission in statesman-like fashion.⁴⁷

Oliver Cromwell Carmichael, Jr. in his superb book New York Establishes a State University, attributes the success of Young's

"no politics" chairmanship to both the make-up of the commission and the chairman's method of procedure. On the former Carmichael concludes: "An examination of the backgrounds of the Commission members reveals there was a broad diversity of interest among them. Although Republicans were in the majority, the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman were Democrats. The members had a wide range of professional interest -- among them were a politician, several educators, a public administrator, a trade-union official, an engineer, a lawyer, and a merchant." Importantly, while two-thirds of the membership was Republican, two-thirds represented urban elements. The chairman's methods of procedure were ingenious; first, the highly professional research staff directed questions rather than opinions to Commission members; second, Chairman Young convened the Commission members in the pleasant surroundings of Lake George so as to induce candid and productive deliberation. And when the Commission did convene Young used ad hoc committees (not standing committees which solidify positions); he prohibited votes, except for the final one on the Commission's report; he delegated the drafting of the final report to a manageable committee of seven members; and, finally, he insisted upon unanimity in the final recommendations.⁴⁸

It is beyond the purpose of this "Draft" history to detail the profoundness of various positions deliberated by the research staffs and Commission members -- such as, the expansion of two-year institutions, the use of scholarships for upper division college work in private institutions, the establishment of State institutions in certain professional fields, the creation of a central state university. Also, how could teachers colleges,

community colleges, agricultural and technical colleges, medical and other graduate schools fit into the scheme of the State University? In spite of Chairman Young's shrewd procedural approaches, vested interests surfaced -- those of private colleges and universities, the Regents, the ethnic minorities, the denominational institutions, the parties, and, of course, the Governor. There was, of course, much overlap of interests. Major issues probably came down to, one, the size and cost of state supported higher education, (The Republican governor was more conscious of costs than more Democratic leaders), and two, the control of public higher education (by the governor, or by the Board of Regents). Not surprisingly, important ancillary issues had to do with medical education and fair educational practices. (One only need remember that the problems of N. Y. C. Jewish youngsters had getting into medical schools had much to do with the beginning of the drive for a State University.)⁴⁹

On February 16, 1948, the commission submitted to the governor a report with four sections. One, a State University under the Board of Regents, to consist of existing units (teachers colleges, technical institutes, the Maritime Academy, contract colleges) and new units (as some four-year colleges, two medical, certain graduate and professional units). Teachers colleges would train teachers, pre-school through secondary schools. The State would support teacher education in the four colleges of New York City; and community colleges would be set up. Second in the Commission's Report, the state scholarship program would be enhanced (presumably to satisfy the private institutions). Third, the "State Education Department should develop and promote a comprehensive system of counseling service in the educational

systems of the state." Lastly, and not surprisingly, public funds would be available to public and private higher education only on the condition that students be admitted on a basis of merit without regard to race, color, creed or national origin, except for denominational institutions. It was expected that costs of the program would in the first year would be approximately \$40 million over present the \$20 million appropriation for state higher education units; and that physical plant would increase to \$125 million from the present value of \$70 million.⁵⁰

The Commission's report had the Governor's support. Indeed, it reflected his handiwork. Dewey's definitive biographer, Richard Norton Smith, notes that while the governor frequently felt as the Regents did about a costly state university (he years later said to Governor Rockefeller: "I like you Nelson but I don't think I can afford you") he became convinced of its need. As previously noted, his own New York City background affected his thinking, especially when his aides, and George Shapiro particularly, pointed out the utter discrimination practiced against blacks and Jews "particularly in private medical and dental schools."⁵¹

On March 11, 1948 the legislature of the state passed bills establishing the State University of New York, community colleges, and fair educational practices. Still, although the passage of the bills did not come easily, they came with amazing speed. While a bipartisan effort in the legislature made possible their introduction, the State Education Department balked at a change previously agreed upon -- that the Executive Secretary of the SUNY Board of Trustees be appointed by the Commissioner of Education.

The final version of the bill was changed to read: "At least one of the executive officers [of the State University] shall be a designee of the Commissioner of Education." Obviously, while Dewey had interest in private higher education and in the Regents' ties to it, he intended to have the State University under the control of its own trustees whom he appointed. The State Education Department lamely argued that the new Trustees would lack administrative experience; and that the new arrangement will create an unhealthy competition between public and private institutions. The Board of Regents tried to substitute a bill effecting its control of the State University. It failed, and the new State University was, on March 12, created by large majorities in the legislature, not, however, without some compromises.⁵²

Enacted into the law were trade-off provisions that the State University's supervision of existing public institutions of higher education would be postponed until April of 1949; that all public and private institutions, including Catholic, would be treated alike in regard to certain forms of State aid; that the control of contract colleges would not impair their relationship with private institutions, such as existed between the state agricultural school and Cornell University; and that ten years would elapse before the teachers colleges became liberal arts colleges. The first compromise, regarding the postponement date implied a stalling tactic to give the Regents time to ponder its historic mission of warding off a State University threat to private higher education.⁵³

What could be more dramatic than the instant creation of one of the World's largest universities? The State University of New

York was intended to embrace eleven state teachers colleges, six agricultural and technical institutes, five institutes of applied arts and sciences, the New York State Maritime Academy, three emergency colleges operated by the Associated Colleges of Upper New York, future developed community colleges and seven colleges operated by privately endowed universities under contract with the State. But, of course, the Board of Regents intended to constrain the new university. When Governor Dewey on August 26, 1948 appointed the 15-member Board of Trustees under the chairmanship of Oliver C. Carmichael, the board was required to not only assume responsibility for the University, but to also determine its relationship to the Board of Regents.⁵⁴

There was immediate contention between the Trustees and the Regents over the title of "President of the State University", the name given to Dr. Alvin E. Eurich upon his appointment by the Trustees. (Dr. Eurich had been the Acting President of Stanford University.) The Regents feigned confusion between Dr. Eurich's title and that of their head, "President, University of the State of New York." Besides, the title was established without agreement between the Regents and the Trustees. Governor Dewey accepted Eurich as "President of the State University". More substantively, the Board of Regents attacked the governor's request to the legislature for \$67.5 million to implement the Trustee's 1949-1954 SUNY development plan, including medical, graduate and research facilities.⁵⁵

The Regents' opposition took the form of the Condon-Barrett bill which would bring SUNY under the Education Department, make the trustees an advisory body to the Regents, and give the Board

of Trustees "corporate powers" over only "new state-operated institutions" (such as new medical centers). The Board of Regents lobbied strenuously that the Board of Trustees had exceeded its mandate -- of a temporary six year existence. The Trustees became equally adamant for their cause as illustrated by their forming of the "Committee to Save the State University." The governor asserted his influence among Republicans; and Democrats who had fought too long for a State University, held their ranks in support of the University. The crucial Assembly vote defeated the Condon-Barrett bill, 94-49. Although counsel for the State Education Department threatened to carry their case to the courts, the State Education Department swung to support of the State University and effected a working relationship with the Board of Trustees. An agreement between the President of the State University and the Commissioner of Education recognized the State University as corresponding to any other New York college or university in its relationship to the Regents, except that the Commissioner would review the SUNY budget for incorporation into the State Education Department Budget. Also, the Education Department would receive for approval SUNY "policy regarding curricula, standards of instruction, admissions policies, and similar matters." Such was the price the State University would pay for assuming administrative control of its 32 state-supported institutions. The State University had, of course, been administering for a year -- recruiting a central administrative staff, providing for office space, conducting meetings with heads of various constituent units, considering administrative organization of the university, and setting priorities for a construction program. Most importantly, the State University

established two medical centers -- by absorbing the Long Island College of Medicine in New York City and the College of Medicine of Syracuse University.⁵⁶

As the State University entered the new decade, it was still in the process of being founded. Its principal framework, the eleven teachers colleges, with their long histories of abject subservience to a frequently disregarding State Education Department, was precarious at best. (The colleges were among the very last of their kind in the nation to house their own students in state-owned dormitories, a powerful symbol of the Regents' disregard.) The first State University Master Plan of the State University, that of 1950, was constructed in consultation with the State Education Department. It concluded that the State requires at least one two-year institution in each of 11 economic areas in the State. More ominously for Regents-Trustees Relationships, it reported that increased enrollment in four-year programs of 4,647 students must be achieved annually between 1950 and 1966, with an additional increase of 43,000 between 1958 and 1966. Following the adoption of the plan the State University began a hard look at its teachers colleges, created two liberal arts colleges (Champlain and Harpur, the former never launched), and two community colleges, Orange County and Jamestown.⁵⁷

Although floundering and still seeking to be "founded" -- the Trustees saw their major problem as "the establishment of a university with the measure of autonomy which insures both integrity and effectiveness" -- the State University in 1951 did achieve the establishment of the Research Foundation of the State University and accreditation by the Middle States

Association. Perhaps SUNY was founded. In September of that year, President Eurich resigned.⁵⁸ In April of 1952, William S. Carlson, formerly President of Universities of Delaware and Vermont would become the second president of the State University.

"The Search for a University: The Carlson-Hamilton Years"

1952-1964

A New York Times editorial of January 5, 1952 applauded the young geologist-explorer and former University of Vermont president William S. Carlson as the new State University head. President Carlson, it concluded " ... takes over a physical plan scattered over the state in more than thirty institutions, two expanding centers for medical education, a sizable building program, a student body of about 47,000 and great opportunities". The new president, however, must have pondered "opportunities" for the State University as weighed against the mass of problems, not the least being a board of trustees to be yet made permanent, "scattered ... institutions" of questionable quality (mostly teachers colleges hardly more than a decade from being "normal schools"), a physical plant yet to be built, and a state bureaucracy of over-sight agencies frequently unsympathetic to the new unknown giant.⁵⁹ One recent student of higher education of the period sees Executive agencies and the legislature of State as continuing to run things so much in the old way, and the period as one of "high policy system equilibrium" hardly changed from pre-SUNY era (domination by Regents, governor, and legislature). The same observer notes, however, a beginning of a precipitous drop to "low ... equilibrium" early in the Carlson tenure.⁶⁰ For all of its seeming losses in recent years the Board of Regents could, so it thought in the early 1950's, still approve SUNY trustees' plans", largely in the interests of private higher education.

And, shortly, the new governor, Averill Harriman, would show an inclination to the private side of higher education far more than either his predecessor Dewey, or his successor, Nelson Rockefeller.

The "low equilibrium" which would set in would not be attributable to President Carlson alone, although he soon belied a 1952 inaugural statement: an ideal university president is "one who makes judgements and doesn't go around making statements."⁶¹ In various quarters he soon made statements in defense of State University needs. As important to a mid-decade search for and definition of the University was a new and permanent Board of Trustees, and its new chairman, Frank C. Moore. With the 1954 legislature act making the Board of Trustees a permanent institution, the State University would more successfully gain territoriality at the expense of the State Education Department. The heretofore idea of the State University being only a supplement to private higher education would begin to fade -- although prior to his confirmation as the Trustees' chairman designee Moore dutifully noted: "the state should supplement and not supplant, the private colleges."⁶²

Surely, Dewey's selection of Frank C. Moore as the trustee chairmanship was one of his most important appointments as governor. Moore was a strong personality with a wealth of state government experience -- Lieutenant Governor and President of the Government Affairs Foundation, and former state controller. He knew well the machinations of the bureaucracy and was adroit and persistent in guiding the fortunes of the University. One close contemporary observer described Dewey's appointment of Moore as moved by the purpose of "monitoring this new entity and

keeping it on track." It was a commitment not in any earlier thinking. Moore would do that superbly, although not always to the liking of other university leaders, including President Carlson. In Carlson's early SUNY leadership years, however, he and Moore complemented one another -- the former the administrator, who searched for a definition of university appropriate to the State University; the latter a statesman, whose practicality kept the "entity" on course.⁶³

Carlson administered well enough. He counselled the Board of Trustees on the establishment of a new dental school, the creation of a University Faculty Senate, the forbidding of national affiliation for fraternities (because of their discriminatory by-laws), the construction of personnel policies, and the study of the need for tuition charge to students. Pressures mounted for additional State University plant and units. At present projections of a student expansion of 40 percent by 1970, private colleges and universities would have to expand 186 percent from its 1955 enrollment. Given the population pressures the Regents approved the establishment of three community colleges on Long Island, and an "upper division" liberal arts college at Stony Brook on the island. But movement was slow. The Regents relented slowly. Teachers Colleges -- the heart of the University -- were permitted to train junior and high school teachers. New units in the University were planned -- community and contract colleges -- and they eventually emerged.⁶⁴

Many quarters in the State, however, felt that the university was "bogged down" -- that it had not fulfilled its

promise. Chairman Moore ably pointed to the steady development of the Liberal Arts College at Harpur, the Upstate and Downstate Medical Centers, five community colleges, and the strengthening of the teaches colleges (with dormitories). But Assemblyman Bernard Austin raised questions: What plans are there for four year college programs in sections of the State not presently covered? How will the state educate 100,000 youth seeking admission? When will there be graduate and professional programs? Benjamin Fine of the New York Times noted that in terms of per capita expenditures on public higher education, New York ranked 45th in the nation. More needed to be done.⁶⁵ But the University's leadership could really not be faulted. In less than a decade it had presided over phenomenal growth.

Still more planning and more resources were obviously required. The 45th-in-the-nation-per-capita-expenditure statistic embarrassed and awakened the state. Even the cautious Governor Harriman came to see the need for a \$250 million bond drive inspired by Chairman Moore and organized by University personnel, from President Carlson down to students who marched in Albany on its behalf. The Regents at first balked on the Bond program but then had to relent, and support it. In November of 1957 it passed with particularly large margins downstate. Now the legislature and the Governor recognized the public's appreciation of its State University's attempt to serve. Bond approval was another mile stone in the building of the University.⁶⁶

But how was the State University to be defined? President Carlson searched for the answer. With the knowledge, if not the

formal approval of the Board of Trustees, the Research Foundation of the State University launched a study of "Research Potentials and Problems", in the University. The study encompassed far more. Whether by intent or otherwise the final report of the study was President Carlson's plan for the University. It proposed a single "flagship" central campus for the university, in the prototype of the great mid-West state universities which would inspire, coordinate, direct and bring to academic maturity the satellite campuses across the state. It was a dramatic, radical, "nutty", splendid idea, yet, perhaps impractical and, certainly a contentious proposal.⁶⁷

Theodore C. Blegen, one of the nation's most distinguished historians, and the Dean of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, conducted the study and wrote its report. The Harvests of Knowledge, A Report on Research Potentials and Problems in the State University of New York.⁶⁸

Like a good historian, Theodore Blegen harked back to the dreams New Yorkers had had for a state or peoples university -- New York City's Major James Duane proposal for some form of a state university in 1784, and seemingly not the University of the State which came in the same year; the pre-Civil War Regents' Committee which called for a state "university of active instruction"; Governor David B. Hill, who, in 1886, lamented the fact that the university of the State "has in fact no existence." Blegen might have mentioned that Peoples College incorporated in 1853 which lost its Morrill land grant to Cornell. New Yorkers, on their frontier, knew, as did westerners, what they wanted, not just a place to narrowly train

farmers and tradesmen, but "... a place where the real productive labors of intellect are to be performed; where the old fields are to be tilled for the new corn; where the harvests of knowledge are actually gathered and garnered up. Its purpose is to promote literature and advance useful knowledge."⁶⁹

Dean Blegen, of course, saw research and teaching as the two arms of the scholar-teacher. He believed that "a true university exists to discover and to disseminate knowledge and understanding and [to] train people in the ways of genuine scholarship. A teaching institution that affords no place to research and gives research no encouragement and support defeats itself." Blegen knew first hand the business of research in a University, and how it had sustained faculty as teachers, not only at the central campus of the University of Minnesota but also at its satellite colleges, units with normal school origins, not unlike New York's teachers colleges. He traveled across New York visiting teachers colleges, Harpur College and some agriculture and technical colleges. He was impressed by the increase in the faculty holding doctorates as compared to 1948; and by their potential to research and teach; by their gratitude for small research grant programs initiated by the Research Foundation. But, he reported, they were a disconsolate faculty -- where were they to look in their own university for resources and attitudes to encourage their being as scholar-teachers? "The State University of New York" he concluded, "lacks the atmosphere of a comprehensive and adequate university ... It is an academic animal without a head." Blegen was not a "Big Ten" representative lording it over the teachers colleges of the State University. (He acknowledged that only about one

in ten faculty members in the nation's universities produce published works of significance. But in a university faculty members practice their craft and "advance useful knowledge.") And, most essential, Blegen seemed to be saying what Clark Kerr of the University of California at Berkeley would say a decade later, "You've got to concentrate talents to make it effective, since talents energize each other." Blegen saw as necessary the energy which emanates from the inner connection of both undergraduate and graduate teaching and the cross fertilization of academic fields. Again Blegen concluded, "Throughout the entire university as it now stands teacher-scholars are in need of the leadership ... and counsel ... [of] the central influences that are totally lacking in the State University of New York."

Copies of the "Blegen Report", as it came to be called, were wide spread -- to the Board of Trustees, the Board of Regents, the Governor and key members of the legislature. Carlson and those closeby -- in the Central Office and the Research Foundation -- viewed the report with enthusiasm and its reception in certain other quarters "verged on enthusiasm." But any such euphoria was short lived. A firestorm ensued. What enthusiasm there was among some Trustees was soon dispelled by the omnipresence of Chairman Frank Moore. He didn't like surprises and cryptically told reports " [the report] does not necessarily reflect the views of our trustees or the research foundation itself". In fact Moore and the trustees believed that the study had overstepped its "assignment to examine the university's research potentials;" and they were more than

irritated by Carlson's actions in the whole matter. They seemingly conjured a conspiracy of sorts -- Blegen and Carlson with a common University of Minnesota background, the expansion of research potentials study into a design for a centralized University, the simultaneous submission of the report to so many quarters, and its widespread press coverage. The Trustees believed they had the university working well enough; that Carlson's intervention only complicated Moore's leadership in whom they really had confidence. The press soon reported that the trustees "turned on" their University President.⁷²

The "violent" reactions of the Board of Regents and their private institution allies to this potential threat to them were quaintly understated. Commissioner of Education James Allen reported that he had not been consulted. Fordham President Lawrence J. McGinley, the past president of the Association of Colleges and Universities of New York State, commented: "Most of us in higher education have been concentrating our thoughts on the broad educational needs [of the state and not the establishment of] a central campus."⁷³

Many of the leaders of the private sector commiserated in a meeting at Cornell University and expressed publically their opposition to a centralized State University. The irony of such action on the campus that one hundred years previously might have become the centralized State University of New York was surely lost to all observers. Governor Harriman at first said the matter was between President Carlson and the Board of Trustees. Soon, however, he defended the idea of a decentralized State University ("It seems to be working out").

Legislators, probably because of their absence from Albany were relatively mute on the matter. In short, only Carlson seemed to defend the report, saying rather lamely, "I think it is a good report. It should get serious attention by the people of this state."⁷⁴

However, do the people really govern on such matters? As Benjamin Fine reported in the New York Times, "Many [parties such as the above, except for Carlson] would have preferred that ... [the report] remain locked in a dusty library closet." Twenty years later, Mort Grant who, as the director of the Research Foundation, had worked closely with Blegen in his study, recognized the "diseconomic scale" of the recommendation -- the construction of a central campus would have far more than consumed the financial resources of the recent bond drive, leaving little for the array of State University units across the state. Yet, Grant saw it as a "curtain raiser" to much of what the University would become. The State University would not have the "flagship" campus that Blegen recommended. But as Blegen would later write to Grant, it would have four "flagships" instead of one -- the University centers at Buffalo, Binghamton, Albany, and Stony Brook.⁷⁵

Within two months of the publication of Blegen's report, The Harvests of Knowledge, William S. Carlson resigned as president of the University. He had always been rather a shadowy figure in spite of his frequent and articulate defense of the University. In reality, he never established a counterpose to Moore, Education Commissioner James Allen or Governor Harriman, although the governor said sincerely enough,

"I regret his resignation."⁷⁶

Following President Carlson's resignation a triumvirate of University deans would administer the university for a year and a half until a new president would be selected. The presiding deans were Herman Cooper, Executive Dean for Teacher Education, Lawrence J. Jarvie, Executive Dean for Institutes and Community Colleges, and John H. Slocum, Executive Dean for Four-Year and Professional Colleges. Because Cooper had responsibility for the largest portion of the University base -- the eleven teacher colleges -- his personality and attitude warrants some examination for understanding the problems of University development perceived by both Blegen and Carlson.⁷⁷

Herman Cooper personified the New York normal school tradition and applied its provincial doctrine and habit to his leadership of the teachers colleges which he forcefully dominated for a quarter of a century. Although applauded then and in his memory for a loyalty to the normal schools so fierce as to save them when threatened in the Great Depression years, his dictatorial attitude was remarkably out of cadence with the educational sophistication of Carlson, Blegen and future university leaders. One college administrator who served him saw him as "a savior and a cross", the latter became almost too much to bear. He arbitrarily controlled much of the curriculum of the colleges and the appointments of their principal administrators. And while many of his choices boded well enough -- perhaps by the law of averages -- "his" teachers colleges required release from him in order to contribute to the new University. Blegen had caught something of their plight. Still, almost by momentum, the colleges made some strides during

the Cooper leadership. Dormitories were built, faculty appointments improved, and the colleges gradually shed the normal school environment. They seemed, however, to move forward at a slower pace than did the community colleges and the professional colleges under Deans Jarvie and Slocum. Community colleges enrollment increased to about a fourth of that of the University. The two medical schools were improved immeasurably; and the Harpur and Stony Brook campuses were showing signs of university caliber. The General Electric Company and Stony Brook worked in consort to develop an engineering curriculum.⁷⁸

On May 17, 1959 Thomas Hale Hamilton became the third president of the State University of New York. He was forty four years of age, did his graduate work at the University of Chicago, had taught political science, and most recently was Vice President for Academic Affairs at Michigan State University. He had an academic bearing attractive to SUNY's improving faculty. The Board of Trustees obviously felt him capable of administering what were now forty four units in the University with a total of 65,000 students.⁷⁹

President Hamilton's problems as University president cut three ways: massive enrollment increases; the difficulty of retaining faculty; and the lack of the movement of the construction programs at a speed to accommodate students and faculty. The University's enrollment expansion was three times that of the nation generally. The faculty was being recruited away from the University -- largely because of SUNY's low salaries and heavy teaching loads. The construction of facilities lagged far behind the student and faculty needs --

classes and faculty offices were overcrowded and frequently confined to an odd assortment of temporary structures. The gloom wasn't eased by the thought of the post-war baby-boomers about to descend upon the campuses.⁸⁰

President Hamilton organized his central staff and proceeded to preside over the sprawling University. The opening of the Stony Brook campus had to be deferred until 1962; and he was distracted by administrative procedural problems at the Long Island Center; and by alleged quality weaknesses in its new engineering program.⁸¹ On the other end of the State the new president participated in negotiations to bring the University of Buffalo into the university.⁸² But President Hamilton seemed very much in the shadow of the Board of Trustees and the governor. Frank Moore probably strove to avoid any Carlson-like surprises. And Nelson Rockefeller seemed to have more than a Harriman-like political interest in the University. Moore and Rockefeller appeared increasingly in concert on university matters. The probably apocryphal story circulated that well into his tenure President Hamilton finally met the governor in a capital elevator.

The joint Moore-Rockefeller effort first manifested itself in the governor's appointment of the committee of truly eminent members to review the higher education requirements in the state. The Heald Committee was reminiscent in stature of Governor Dewey's Young Temporary Commission on the Need of a State University. Henry T. Heald, its chairman was most notably, the president of the Ford Foundation. Fellow Committee members, Marion B. Folsom and John W. Gardner, had comparable

credentials, the former had been the chief executive officer of Kodak and President Eisenhower's Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare; the latter was president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The Committee was charged to make recommendations regarding educational access to all students, the development of proper research capacity, and the training of necessary personnel to serve the state and the nation.⁸³

While the Heald Committee undertook its charges, the Trustees designed a more immediate 1960 University Master Plan to address demands for college opportunities, the numbers of students to be accommodated, and the kinds of programs necessary to train and enlighten the citizenry. The Trustees proposed a five part plan to expand two-year facilities; to accelerate the arts and sciences at the upper division levels (of the Colleges of Education); to move units in a multi-purpose direction; to place full-time master's degree programs in the four year colleges; and to establish doctoral programs in four locations, Stony Brook, Binghamton, Albany, and Buffalo.⁸⁴

In November of 1960 the Heald Committee issued its report which, because it addressed all higher educational needs in the State, was anticipated equally by private institutions and the State University. Its major conclusions: it estimated that by 1985 private colleges would be able to accommodate only about 40 percent to students (rather than 60 percent), placing far more burden on public institutions; it called for attainment of excellence in both private and public higher education; it reported that the State University had "less administrative and

management freedom of operation than almost any other public supported institution or group of institutions in the United States"; it proposed a realignment of higher education responsibilities, most importantly that the Regents only receive, review and approve SUNY Master Plans, and that the Regents take no responsibility for implementing them; it suggested that direct aid to private institutions not exceed 10 percent of the "teaching expenditures at the colleges."

Specifically, in regard to the State University, the Committee called for: converting colleges of education to liberal arts colleges (the ten year ban was up), expanding the community colleges, providing graduate work at two locations, instituting year round operations of the colleges, establishing a State-wide system of educational television, and instituting a uniform tuition charge. The Report concluded by stressing two choices for the State: either its patchwork system of public discontent about higher education continue; or the State assume the leadership for higher education expected of a great state.⁸⁵

The Trustees could not have been more pleased with the Heald Committee report. Its own 1960 Master Plan was already consonant with it. Where it was not it quickly added an addendum to start the conversion of colleges of education to liberal arts institutions, to expand the community colleges, to increase graduate programs in four of the university centers, and to establish a fixed tuition policy for all state operated units and contract colleges. Although not placed in the addendum, the Trustees agreed with the Heald Committee on the need of the State University to be relieved of the procedural restraints imposed on the university by various state agencies.

The Heald report had suggested a more active participation by college councils in the affairs of the colleges. The Trustees agreed on more responsibility by college councils but insisted that the Trustees continue their own ever increasing supervisory control of the University. In the following year many of the Heald Report recommendations were enacted into law.⁸⁶

It was an historic movement in 1961 when any remaining suggestion of Regents' administrative control of the State University was removed. Now the Regents responsibility for the State University was only to receive and approve the quadrennial master plans. In signing an enactment of the new relationship, Governor Rockefeller declared:

" ... the measure grants the State University Trustees for the first time the necessary final responsibility for continuing implementation of the State University plan -- as approved by the Board of Regents and the Governor -- which will permit the State University to become, in the carrying out and administering of its programs, an outstanding public institution of higher learning."⁸⁷

In the following year legislation was enacted which finally removed 1948's founding caveat: that the State University of New York was to "supplement but not supplant" private higher education. Was the peoples' state university really free of the historic Regents?

The University's legislative freedom from the Regents didn't rest well in all places, including both some legislators, and some of the governor's own party. The Senate's Temporary President and Majority Leader, Walter J. Mahoney, played the role of Regent remnant. Mahoney had always seemed to profess public support for the State University (contrary to numerous

letters opposing the University founding, located in the Dewey manuscripts at the University of Rochester.) Seemingly, Mahoney now could not contain himself, especially with the State University's one billion dollar expansion program underway; and more importantly with present constitutional prohibition against state aid to private colleges and universities. He and Assembly Speaker Joseph F. Carlino sponsored legislation for a resolution to establish an overall study seeking an evaluation of the State University. The resolution was passed in 1963 with \$100,000 enabling legislation following. The legislature appointed a "Blue ribbon" committee, chaired by Herman B. Wells, the Chancellor of the University of Indiana, with such luminous consultants as Milton Eisenhower, the President of John Hopkins University (and Dwight Eisenhower's brother). The Committee's Report forthcoming in December of 1964 would add grist to SUNY proponents.⁸⁸

The great political contention over the building of the State University of New York was, however, not grist to President Hamilton's academic turn of mind. He presided well enough over important enhancements of the university -- the improvement of library services, the creation of an Atmospheric Science Center, the protection of academic freedom, the building of an educational aid program to Indonesia; and most importantly the conversion of the colleges of education into multi-purpose arts and science colleges, and the merging of the University of Buffalo with the State University. The latter two accomplishments were significant legacies, for the colleges of education, once among the weakest of the nation's normal school

began becoming viable foundations of the University; and the absorption of the University of Buffalo, near bankruptcy as it was, had integrity and stature and gave the University instantly schools of law and medicine. But, President Hamilton seemed out of place in the contentious Albany setting. He resigned effective December 31, 1962 and accepted the presidency of the University of Hawaii, a position which must of looked inviting indeed.⁸⁹

J. Lawrence Murray, the Secretary of the University, was appointed Acting president to serve until September of 1964. Throughout a long care-taking tenure, his administration contributed yeoman service to the University by struggling with and implementing a \$400.00 tuition policy. Undoubtedly the Acting President also counselled Governor Rockefeller in his Spring 1964 legislative recommendations regarding the University, to wit: greater flexibility and independence for the State University, increase staff, lump sum appropriations, and, significantly, the submission of the University budget requests directly to the governor rather than through the State Education Department. The legislature accommodated the governor. Seemingly the Regents power over the State University was ever slipping away.⁹⁰

"Samuel B. Gould and the Quantum Leap of the State University"

1964-1970

While Acting President Murray presided over the inexorable movement of the University, the Trustees searched long and hard for its new president. He was Samuel B. Gould, the president of the Educational Broadcasting Corporation, the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut area's first educational television station.⁹¹ At first blush it seemed an unlikely choice -- a media man? But, knowingly or not, the trustee's choice could not have been better. In less than four years Gould would earn a Time Magazine cover story as the "unknown giant" of the nation's higher education.⁹² His background was solid and diverse -- Bates College Phi Beta Kappa, Oxford student of literature, assistant to the University of Boston president, president of Antioch College, and, then, of University of California (Santa Barbara) before the New York City television job. The mix of Gould's background with that of SUNY would bode well for the University. Despite the grim face of SUNY -- the curricular, physical plant and bureaucratic snarls -- more aspects were favorable than not. The curricular programs required of a university were at least underway. the Construction Fund was established. The Regents and the legislature learned from the Bond drive of the people's commitment to their State University. Most importantly Rockefeller assured candidate Gould of the governor's unerring

support if he were to accept the University leadership. The assurance as understated. Rockefeller became ecstatic about both the University and Gould. The Governor likes "to have that guy around, whatever's up" said one of Rockefeller's top aids. "I think its' because they're both such operators."⁹³

Gould became President on September 1, 1964. He immediately eyed the proposed 1964 Master Plan and changed it to suit his purposes for the University -- increased library resources, programs for the disadvantaged, more use of technology in instruction, arts and sciences doctoral programs at the University Centers, formation of a School of Criminal Justice, two additional arts and science colleges (Old Westbury and Purchase), establishment of a SUNY Press, additional community colleges, and the creation of a new medical center at Stony Brook.⁹⁴ The Regents, under the direction of Commissioner of Education James Allen approved of the plan, marking the beginning of a congenial Gould-Allen relationship. (Of course Regents-SUNY tensions would flare up periodically and again get intensive after Gould's leave of the University in 1970.)

On the heels of Gould's assumption of the presidency Herman B. Wells submitted his report, The Legislature and Higher Education in New York State. As Gould had so frequently done, the report commended New York for its " ... 15-year record of bringing educational opportunity to nearly every potential student in the state ... [; a record] not exceeded anywhere in the county." Then the Wells report recounted to the legislature SUNY needs, many of which the legislature would ultimately address: more self-determination, freedom to develop new institutions; a chief executive officer with power "in all

[substantive] matters" of central and decentralized administration, improvement of University-Construction Fund relations, and a partnership of SUNY and New York industry and government. The report also recommended, undoubtedly to Senator Mahoney's liking, increased state aid to private colleges and universities.⁹⁵

The New York Legislature, however, was slow to catch the Gould spirit, even though he had actively courted them. In early 1965 they proceeded with their traditional budgetary slashing of SUNY requests, this time to the tune of \$6.8 million. Gould had told Senate Minority Leader Joseph Zaretzki "it is going to be tough to cut this budget," but agreed to a \$2 million reduction. When Zaretzki pretended to the public that Gould had agreed to his \$6.8 million cut, the president challenged the Democratic leadership: "I made it clear that I had to be extremely reluctant even about the \$2 million cut." Furthermore, Gould laid out what the cuts would mean in terms of reduced funding for scholarships, libraries, educational television and a 15 percent cut in the graduate centers. The legislature relented. Cutting SUNY budgets in the mid-sixties became unpopular.⁹⁶

Gould had challenged hard-bitten legislators as he did weathered bureaucrats, but with a surprising finesse. His manner was "gentle", "low-key", with a reserve that limited intimacy. He occasionally smiled and was "incorrigibly optimistic." Although his lack of arrogance puzzled legislators, it inspired an increasingly sophisticated university staff and faculty.⁹⁷

To lack arrogance, however, did not mean that Gould missed the need to show the public the meaning of its State University. It was not just bricks and mortar. Although created early in 1948 it carried on the traditions of academia. 1,500 persons, most in academic garb -- (1,000 from colleges and universities, across the nation) -- filed into New York City's Philharmonic Hall to listen to Governor Rockefeller praise the new president and to witness Trustees Frank C. Moore invest the seventh President of the State University with the seal of office. In his inaugural address Gould criticized the present "inner confusion" in a society where equality and harmony are vitally necessary. He concluded: "The university of today and tomorrow has a primary responsibility for examining these characteristics of formlessness, of courageously making known its findings, of searching for countervailing forces and of educating all who look toward it to an awareness of the necessities of our world and the promise such a world holds. This is an intellectual responsibility but it is a service responsibility as well." Although Gould wanted to convey to state and nation the meaning of the trappings and rhetoric of the moment few probably saw the significance of his proximity on the dais to Rockefeller and Moore. Gould, as the Governor's surrogate in leading the university, was invested in office by Frank Moore, the principal legatee of the University's founder, former Governor Thomas E. Dewey. Within a few weeks Moore would resign as President of the Board of Trustees. The New York Times editorialized that "out of a hodgepodge of institutions, most of them teachers colleges, there has begun to grow a network with a sense of

pride in its mission." The editorial noted that Moore's "eleven years of conscientious service [during which time he] ... has often had to bear the brunt of criticism over the university's early floundering." In an understatement it concluded that he "may take pride in leaving his post at a moment of significant progress and ever greater promise."⁹⁸

From his headquarters at 8 Thurlow Terrace Gould pushed forward the State University course, with appropriate parties from the Governor's office, the legislative chambers, the State Education Department and an array of agencies -- meeting his office or theirs. By night he met many of the same parties in working or social settings, usually returning early enough to his resident study to work on speeches. (He averaged five major, and some thirty minor speeches per month.) He spent no little time in his New York City office or traveling to campuses across the state.⁹⁹

President Gould managed to balance his attention to the various layers of units in the University, the base being the ten arts and science colleges. Although "the work horses of the system" they formed a precarious base,¹⁰⁰ with their normal school traditions out of which came the administrative versions of Herman Cooper.

These units had remained normal schools until the late thirties to then become not much different as State Teachers Colleges, and a little later as Colleges of Education. There was, however, enough administrative and scholarly talent there -- barely -- on which to build. Even Cooper picked some winners as presidents, such as Harry Porter at Fredonia, who later

became University Provost; and some young scholars were attracted, such as Walter Harding, the Thoreau specialist, to Geneseo. With the impetus of the Heald Committee report and that of Governor Rockefeller, in 1961 the four year colleges (of education) had become "State University Colleges" and began offering liberal arts degrees. The conversion to academic respectability came slowly however. Said one veteran university administrator: "It is not easy to overcome one hundred years of deprivation and a pattern of public post-secondary education designed to staff the public schools by shanghaiing girls into the profession." Gould's leadership would make a vast difference, with an accelerated increase of plant and quality. First rate architects were brought in to design campuses; and more demanding arts and sciences courses replaced many of the professional education courses.¹⁰¹ Attractive faculty were pulled to the colleges, by substantial salaries and the soaring reputation of the new university.

The Research Foundation helped the colleges immensely by invariably increasing the number of its small research grants to faculty -- to soon reach \$1 million per year.¹⁰² Nonetheless, the normal school legacy lived on. Twenty years later, Walter Harding would still deplore his college's provincial attitude toward faculty research.¹⁰³

The most dramatic mid-sixties movement was felt in the four University Centers. President Gould appointed a nationally known University of Maryland physicist, John S. Toll, president of SUNY at Stony Brook. Toll in turn brought into the new graduate center an array of outstanding scholars, some with credentials far exceeding his own, such as the Nobel laureate in

physics, C. N. Yang. Within five years every Stony Brook department would offer the Ph.D. -- with 100 new faculty members and 1,000 new students coming in each year. Although headed toward stature in science graduate studies, the University was determined to balance the humanities and social science work with the sciences; and undergraduate with graduate teaching. Starting from a mud hole Stony Brook was determined to rise to the position as the University's foremost center of learning.¹⁰⁴

One exception to Stony Brook as the paramount University center might be the SUNY at Buffalo. As previously noted the private University of Buffalo had been purchased in 1962, giving SUNY undergraduate to graduate departments, and schools of law, medicine, and dentistry. Its new president, Martin Meyerson, a University of California (Berkeley) specialist in city planning and urban research, designed a new 1,000 acre campus to be completed in suburban Buffalo by 1970. It would become a city of 30,000. As with Stony Brook, President Gould saw to it that necessary salaries would be provided to attract scholars of national reputation to SUNY Buffalo.¹⁰⁵

The third University Center was that of the former State Teachers College at Albany. Unlike the other teachers colleges the Albany institution had had a fine reputation. For half a century it had prepared the secondary school teachers for the state and looked down upon the other teachers colleges.¹⁰⁶ It had a superior faculty, although undistinguished for any serious research. By 1965 its new campus on the outside of the city, designed by architect Edward Durell Stone, was nearing completion. The design was massive and ultramodern. Intending

to be a graduate center, Albany would shake its teacher-training atmosphere more readily than did the other former teachers colleges, but still only with partial success.¹⁰⁷

Converting the 4 year liberal arts college Harpur at Binghamton into a graduate center would be a far easier matter. It joined the University system in 1950 having been Triple Cities College, an adjunct of Syracuse University. It was strong from the beginning, undoubtedly the first of the SUNY units to achieve stature. In 1958 Harpur College moved to new campus at Vestal (outside Binghamton) and in 1965 was designated a Center. Faculty members did research as well as their teaching. Bruce Dearing, a former English professor at Swathmore College, was appointed President by Gould in late 1964. He was determined to maintain the college's short tradition of humanism and its commitment to excellence. Aldo S. Bernardo, a brilliant Renaissance scholar rather typified the quality of their faculty.¹⁰⁸

President Gould soon prided himself in noting that every young person in the state would very soon be within commuting distance of a State University unit. This was particularly to be accomplished and enhanced by having the six agriculture and technical colleges diversify their offerings and, along with the community colleges, offer a university-parallel curriculum. Such an arrangement would allow qualified students to transfer from the two year units of the university to four year colleges or one of the Centers. In the 1965-67 period eight new community colleges were approved for construction. The idea of blanketing the state with two year units was given a boost by

the Knoell Report of 1966. It was the product of a Trustees' study commissioned in 1964 to explore ways of extending educational opportunity to all high school graduates. The study, along with the 1966 Interim Revision of the 1964 Master Plan, affirmed the idea of comprehensive curriculum in all two year units, including non-degree programs. Tied to the recommendations regarding comprehensive education opportunities was revision of admissions procedures. Students could list optional choices so as to be admitted somewhere in the University in the event they failed to achieve their first choice.¹⁰⁹

It was apparent by the second year of Gould's presidency that he was succeeding. In the abstract he had issued his inaugural commitment to a "University ... [which] has a primary responsibility for examining ... [the] characteristics of formlessness [of society's] ... inner confusion ...; courageously making known its findings ..."¹¹⁰ In legalistic terms he understood the formal relationship of the University to politically elected and appointed officials. University heads usually make clear their missions and usually understand the political context of their institution. Such is their strategy. Gould knew, however, that his effectiveness would really depend on how his personality might influence political approaches to his mission for the university and to the political context of the university - to his tactical approaches. Twenty years later Gould would say that such tactical approaches do not lend themselves to description. "There were many of these and with diverse characteristics; some were subtler, repetitive,

seemingly unimportant ... I am sure many faculty would scorn them as beneath their dignity, especially when they seemed to have overtones of public relations."¹¹¹

The nature of Gould's informal relationship to the Albany power structure was complex and is difficult to characterize (except for that governor's aide who so categorically commented that Rockefeller liked to "have that guy around, whatever's up").¹¹² What was known is Gould's relationships to his staff and to certain faculty leaders. Early in his presidency Gould met at Jack's Oyster Bar with faculty leaders -- of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Association of the State University. Gould listened intently as the respective leaders of the two organizations, Webb Fiser and Martin Fausold, debated the roles their organizations might play in advising the university on policy matters -- that the faculty Senate concentrate on internal matters of the University; and that the Faculty Association consider external as well as internal matters.¹¹³ In due course Gould would recognize the Senate as the official voice of the statewide faculty but would maintain bi-monthly contact with the Faculty Association. His associations with the Faculty were tactical matters of sincere human relations which seemed important to both the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Association. They were Gould's way of giving unity to the statewide diverse faculty. He found other ways to enhance the relationship -- Biannual assemblies, University-wide "Conversations-in-the-Discipline", and the University Awards Program (launched previously by Mort Grant, the director of the Research Foundation, but supported vigorously by Gould).¹¹⁴ The President also successfully applied the University-wide idea to

the Conference of Presidents and a University-wide Student Assembly. Although Gould's relationship with the unit presidents was undoubtedly paramount, faculty and students sensed that his relationship with them was far more than "public relations."

Gould didn't let up. He drove himself. by late 1966 a Central Office staff of over fifty administrative officers were in his charge, many of whom bustled in the close quarters of a converted Thurlow Terrace residence. Now there were sixty-four units in the University.¹¹⁵ Success seemed to adorn his many efforts although the optimistic appearance of success might have been a "tactic." If tactical it fitted his private way of muting disappointment and anxiety.

Other University leaders operated differently, perhaps out of a felt necessity. New York University President James M. Hester seemed petulant in publically charging the state with favoring SUNY to the detriment of private universities and colleges. Hester and many other heads of private institutions bewailed to the governor. Rockefeller, in fact, was sympathetic to their cause. In 1961 he had supported the Scholar Incentive Program. (\$100 to \$300 for each private college student, depending on need). By 1967 the program brought nearly \$70 million annually to private higher education. But all along the private institutional leaders had told the governor S.I.P. was aiding students far more than the institutions they were attending. Rockefeller somewhat agreed but told them to bide their time. Attention must first be given to the State University. Finally, on March 4, 1967 the governor appointed a

distinguished panel, chaired by Ford Foundation President George McBundy to study the problems of funding private colleges and universities. After considerable jockeying between the McBundy staff, the governor's aides and other parties Rockefeller endorsed the plan on February 1, 1968. The McBundy proposal called for private institutions to receive from the state \$400 for each bachelor's and masters' degrees and six times that amount for doctoral degrees. Now the legislature felt the con and pro pressures, Jewish and "liberal" groups opposing, Catholic groups and private college, the Governor, and Chancellor Gould supporting. It was another Rockefeller-Gould tandem effort which succeeded. Aside from its funding recommendations the McBundy report suggested that the "Regents have been too passive in the exercise of their regulatory functions with respect to higher education."¹¹⁶

Perhaps the McBundy allusion to the Regents' "regulatory functions" was in response to a Regents drive in the summer of 1967 to get the New York constitutional convention to write into the constitution Regents' responsibility for higher education in the state. The Regents noted that their founding in 1784 preceded the first Constitution of the State and that their role was not constitutionally prescribed.¹¹⁷ At the same time the REgents and Commissioner Allen gave assurance to the public that SUNY (and City University of New York) should be free from any State interference with their autonomous development of their own "programs, facilities, and faculties." After the Regents' plea for their inclusion in the Constitution the six presidents of the leading private universities expressed the fear that the

State University might take over the role of planning all higher education in New York. Both Commissioner Allen and Chancellor Gould assured them otherwise. Six months later when Francis H. Horn, President of the Committee on Independent Colleges and Universities repeated the alarm over SUNY's alleged over-growth Gould stated publically: "It is unfortunate to get that all out again We're not going to make progress by bickering over fears that someone is going to swallow up someone else" Commissioner Allen agreed.¹¹⁸

Presumably the Rubicon had been crossed. After nearly two centuries of neglect at the hands of the Regents, public higher education was accorded its due. In its second issue of the new year, 1968, Time Magazine placed Gould on its cover and in lengthy fashion described how SUNY with its 139,147 students was the most single important development in the nation's higher education. It quoted Harvard Sociologist David Riesman as predicting that New York "is well on its way to overtaking California in the quality of its public higher education;" Rockefeller as declaring: "If you want to preview the American university of the 21st century, look at what is happening in higher education at S. U. N. Y. today;" University of Missouri Vice President Charles Brice Ratchford as observing: New York is compressing "... into ten what every other university has taken 100 years to do;" and one educational analyst simply concluded: SUNY is "rawness with class." Chancellor Gould, according to Time, seemed particularly pleased by the diversity of the University's 59 campuses ("The worst thing that could happen to this university is that one campus would become like

another"); and by the comprehensiveness of SUNY ("I can't think of a single possibility for education in this country that doesn't exist in the state university").¹¹⁹ Many university educators from across the nation wondered how Gould did it -- how he conjured such public backing to build a university and at the same time meet the crises attendant upon a university (especially in the tumultuous context of "Vietnam"). From his Sarasota, Florida retirement home in 1987 Gould mused: "I was asked over and over (from as far away as Texas, for example) to explain the techniques which helped us to maintain our political support. This I declined to do, except to say that political relationships are likely to remain strong when they have been created well before crises occur." Gould was saying unobtrusively what he practiced: that his tactic of human relations premised his strategy of University leadership.¹²⁰

Chancellor Gould's strategy for the State University development in 1968 was reflected in yet another Master Plan. Although dull in appearance when delineated on paper the plan in reality reflected State University's political as well as education goals. Experience demonstrated the seriousness with which they were constructed in consultation with staffs, faculties, and students. The Master Plan principally planned for: integration of the University's programs to allow more adequate transferability of students; the involvement of students, faculty and administration in the development of University policy; University-wide coordination for the use and development of computers; a plan for a joint SUNY-Regents study of continuing education needs in the state; a call for the Regents to develop an information base for higher education planning in the state; a

plan for the Central Administration (to be called Central Staff) to coordinate campuses' efforts; and to accord students more flexibility in changing programs in their undergraduate experience. In sum the State University in 1968 and 1969, according to a Central "Staff" member Robert Spencer, became increasingly conscious "of itself and of its purposes. The pressures of ... growth ... [which] had masked the beginnings of an articulated system ... were giving way to ... [identifying] the interests of the parts with that of the whole."¹²¹

On April 9, 1970 Gould shocked the University and the State by resigning his chancellorship. He noted that "for some time [he had wanted] to examine major problems of education from a different viewpoint." To say the least he wanted relief from the pressures of 286,000 students perhaps particularly student dissident behavior at the Buffalo and Stony Brook Centers. Mrs. Maurice T. Moore, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees spoke for the larger educational constituency, when she described him as "one of the most perceptive, compassionate and effective men in American higher education today." Governor Rockefeller's words of "regret" over his resignation could not express his real loss. The Rockefeller-Gould tandem days were over. When the press queried Gould for further explanation of his leaving he commented, "I had pledged to seek a standard of education for the university which would place it within the foremost of public institutions of higher learning in the country. The goal is now in sight."¹²² There was near unanimity of agreement although as is particularly true of academia, dissents were heard, in this case invariably muted -- some charged that he had

vacillated on certain matters, such as on budget measures; others that he should have given more of himself. A month following his resignation Gould did a valedictory of sorts to the nation, an interview with the members of the staff of U.S. News and World Report. It was published in the June 8, 1970 issue under the title "Changes Coming in American Colleges."¹²³

Gould contended, in the interview, that the future of American colleges will take a "radically different form", one that will address more the need for social change rather than "the exploration of ideas." Implicit, of course, was the diminution of "some of the energy ... [which the University] would otherwise put into the intellectual aspects of its task"; and the politicizing of universities. When asked if American colleges and universities were doing a satisfactory job of "educating young people today" Gould replied that "they are doing a better job than most people give them credit for" -- that students are learning to think for themselves. When they do they "don't always think what you would like to have them think. And they become very critical." Gould did express concern about students retreating from reason and "by an increased leaning toward astrology and occultism [and the use of drugs.]" Faculties, Gould agreed, are "responsible for a good deal of the [campus] unrest," frequently without realizing it. By that Gould meant that faculties sometimes "lack of relevance and vitality ... [in] some of the courses they teach." Also, he noted that "faculty members sometimes don't pay very much attention to students personally." By and large, however, Gould praised faculty and blamed society. "I don't think the

university is at fault for the Vietnam war ...; the great pollution problems ..., and the racial problems." Certainly, he went on, the problems of student unrest are far too complex to think that "by being tough on students ... we have solved our problem."¹²⁴

Chancellor Gould closed his interview with a prediction that "within the next 10 or 15 years -- it probably will take a little longer -- ... the university will be far more flexible"; it "will draw together all the different educational and cultural forces that surround it" (Museums, symphonies, libraries, business, industry, government); it "will be nothing more than a loose federation of all these entities"; "a person will be judged to be educated ... not on the basis of how much time he spent in a conventional classroom ... but on the basis of what he knows." In short, we in the university are just beginning to realize that "a student should learn far more outside the classroom; that we too often equate "learning with our old ideas of form and measurement and order." Finally,

"It's very hard for many of us to accept this change in society, but I think it is coming--almost inevitably. And it's the task of the university to try to prepare itself by thinking ahead to the kinds of things that ought to be done, the ways in which it can adjust in the future -- even lead in the future and maintain its central role in society. The university will do this if, at the same time that it keeps itself deeply concerned with the world of thought, it draws closer to the social needs of the time. It should do this, I believe, not by becoming a political arena or a social agency but rather by showing how the world of thought can be the effective partner to the world of action and change.

If the university understood its mission more clearly today, and if it were fulfilling and interpreting that mission better, there would be much less muddy thinking going on -- not only on the campus but in the community as well."¹²⁵

"The Test of the State University"

The Boyer Years, 1970-1977

In late July of 1970 Vice Chancellor for University-wide Activities Merton Ertell issued a call to the University's unit presidents to meet in New York City. There Mrs. Maurice T. Moore, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees announced that Ernest T. Boyer, Vice Chancellor of the University, would be the University's new chancellor. Some eyebrows were raised. Was the Search thorough enough (even though the Trustees seven-man search committee met 13 times over three months)?¹²⁶ Mrs. Moore and Chancellor Gould gave every assurance that Boyer was the man for the job. Gould described the new chancellor as "a man of deep educational commitment" with "the courage and persistence so necessary to approach the huge tasks of the future."¹²⁷ Such talk was not merely rhetoric on Gould's part. The seven years of F. Moore-Rockefeller-Gould plenitude and clout would be followed by years of budget crunches and renewed war between SUNY and her powerful peers on the Albany scene. Gould really believed Boyer could meet such challenges.

The 42-year-old Ernest Boyer had been in charge of University-wide activities from 1965 to 1968 when he became Vice Chancellor. Because of his youthful appearance, warm demeanor, and university responsibility to interact with the administrators and faculty in far flung SUNY units he invariably came to be called "Ernie." The "raised eyebrows" in New York City might have been a miss-reading of Boyer's apparent congeniality ("the personality kid"), or the seeming paucity of

a background necessary to lead a University enterprise of 286,000 students. (Greenville College A.B., University of Southern California Ph.D., Upland College teacher and dean, director of Center for Coordinated Education at the University of California [Santa Barbara] before coming to SUNY.) The Boyer personality, unlike Gould's, was enigmatic. Of course, a public figure such as Boyer who would come to lead the world's largest university for seven years and then become respectively the nation's Commissioner of Education and the President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching was not simply "a personality kid". There seems to have been, however, a spectrum of view by those who were at close range of Boyer in his SUNY chancellorship days -- from laudatory ("good job", "a capacity at timing", "ideas oriented", "campuses saw him as a leader", "made tough decision", "a genius at manipulation of constituencies", "warm", "spectacular" relations with the Board of Trustees", "personable", "articulate", "brilliant with the Council of Presidents") to slightly critical ("reluctant to make hard decisions", "wanted things nice", "feared press negatives", "needed substance on academic matters", "bureaucrats saw little leadership", "didn't know where University was going", "too much of a peace-maker", "exploited timing in personal interests").¹²⁸

The facts of the Boyer era suggest that his time precluded a Gould-like success. It was a time of crescendo of student unrest, of renewed assertion of legislative and budget division controls, of a resurfacing of the "privates'" fears of SUNY competition, of Regents' declaration of its power, and the

Governor Rockefeller's "right turn" with the times. Perhaps, the State University had inevitably become only a "holding company",¹²⁹ requiring a public relations management which overshadowed University leadership.¹³⁰ (The irony is that Gould's "human" tactical approach seemed to give meaning to his larger strategical leadership goals, whereas Boyer's public relations seemed to many to be both only tactical and strategical.)

Long time SUNY Trustee Donald Wickham in 1970 reflected on Boyer as Gould's successor in the chancellor's role and thought well of it, especially in terms of the expectation that the Boyer regime would, of necessity digest the Gould movement in the University. To be sure, things in the University needed pause and attention.¹³¹ The College at Old Westbury was a case in point. Gould's flexibility ideas alluded to in his U. S. News and Worlds Report "farewell" statement were rather tried at the new liberal arts college at Old Westbury, and were found wanting. There the college hoped to end the lock-step march of semesters; to grant students the right to determine much of their own study and research areas; and to use "mechanical devices to free faculty from the drudgery of repeated lectures ... ". Harper Magazine had a field day with the typical events which took place at Old Westbury. "At a meeting the first night, the students spent four hours arguing whether all, some, or none of the school's bathrooms would be co-ed. No conclusion was reached. A girl spent one entire semester polishing a four-foot-high piece of bark. Perhaps one thousand proposals were met with the objection, 'What's new about that?' A course on

the oppression of women turned into an activist group that mothered the entire Women's Liberation movement on Long Island. Two campus buildings were burned, and bomb scares repeatedly emptied classrooms. All students receives grades of 'pass' or 'no credit' but grades of 'no credit' were not recorded. Students and faculty failed to agree on anything except the urgent necessity of [President] Wofford's resignation."¹³² The State University's Board of Trustees, rather agreeing with Harpers indictment, closed the college for a year, to re-open it in October, 1971 with a new president, John D. Maguire, and with a new and less experimental mission.¹³³ At the other end of the state what was going on at SUNY Buffalo came into national view and needed some pause and attention. The students and faculty unrest at the Buffalo Center represented in the extreme anti-"establishment" and anti-Vietnam uprisings on the other SUNY campuses, and equalled the situations at Columbia and Cornell universities. Buffalo's radical students demanded a say in University government, the elimination of naval defense research and an end to ROTC. When Acting President Peter Regan ignored the demands, the students went on strike, and the Buffalo administration called in the police. Students shot at the police and stock piled rocks and molotov cocktails. An estimated quarter of a million dollars worth of property was destroyed. 35 policemen and 22 students were injured. 45 teachers engaged in a "sit-in" of the administration building. All were arrested on two criminal charges, where upon 30 faculty members, fourteen of them deans, formed a University Survival Group to stop "these politically motivated external forces which threaten to turn our campus into open territory for a witch

hunt."¹³⁴ Needless to say the semester ended early at Buffalo (and on many other campuses). Boyer kept his "head". Most indictments were dropped. The residue would generally dissipate except in the state capital where legislators threatened reprisals. Rockefeller saved the academic freedom of the faculty but not the State University's budgets.¹³⁵ When the legislature in the early seventies turned conservative on SUNY appropriations, the faculty-student radicalism was only one cause, and at that probably secondary to the conservative times and the pressures of "the Albany peers" of the University, the Regents, the legislature, and the Budget Division.¹³⁵

While SUNY's press relations were not helped by Old Westbury and SUNY Buffalo affairs, Boyer in a U. S. News and World Report interview could point with particular pride to its newest unit, Empire College, a "University Without Walls -- [a] New Venture in Higher Education." The concept was in the spirit of Gould's valadictory in the same magazine two years previously -- the need for new ways to draw on the existing campuses. Boyer eloquently described how students from across the state could "break out" of their college or vocation and work independently with a "mentor" at one of five centers, Saratoga Springs, Rochester, Albany, New York City, Long Island. Rather than the standard lectures, residence requirements and credit hours, students would read, research, write, attend some lectures (on regular SUNY campuses), use some new learning technology independently, report into his or her mentor for an hour or two weekly. Yet, this was not "Old Westbury I" (as contrasted with II). The essence of this program was a high

standard of quality. Still Boyer was cautious, maintaining a "hopeful yet skeptical" stance about Empire College.¹³⁶ (Time seems to have justified Gould's and Boyer's hopes for the College. By 1985 13,000 students would graduate from Empire State College, their success mainly attributed to the college's clear purpose, its adjustment to students needs, its emphasis on service, its adaptation to change, and to its continuity of faculty and administration.)¹³⁷

Boyer's honeymoon as Chancellor was shortlived, indeed. Austerity hit the University almost instantly. The pendulum had swung. For political and economic reasons, in state and nation, the large "welfare" spending days were over. Austerity was in. In New York, legislative and Budget Division pressures forced SUNY to face the new fiscal reality. The University reduced its enrollment goals, left hundreds of professional positions unfilled, cut its research programs, and, surely to the disappointment of former Chancellor Gould, severely cut back its overseas study activities. Projected construction efforts were almost eliminated. And to fund construction already in progress the Board of Trustees raised its undergraduate tuition from \$400 to \$550 with plans for a second round of increase in the Fall of 1973.¹³⁸ (However, Tuition Assistance Programs would continue, with students from families whose net income was less than \$2,000 paying no tuition.) Dormitory fees were also increased. Many students protested the cuts and found a mighty supporter in the great historian, Henry Steele Commager who deplored SUNY's action and argued that college education in 1971 was more universal than was high school education in 1920. The historian

had two principal arguments for there being no SUNY tuition: One, self-government needs an educated citizenry; two, the complexity of society requires it if the poor are to have a chance. "The United States -- the richest ... [in the Western world] -- is ... almost the only one which requires university students to pay tuition."¹³⁹ Commager's voice was, of course, a "cry in the wilderness" except for the City University of New York which could hold off its charge for tuition for a while longer.

Much of Boyer's tenure as chancellor seemed consumed by the state budgetary process which in the new era of conservative mood and shrinking tax dollars reflected fierce struggles by peer constituencies of SUNY. The process was so convoluted with the Legislature, the Budget Division, the State Education Department, and other agencies' involvement that one SUNY Central official believed that the University was fortunate to have at least one person who understood the process, Harry K. Spindler, Director of University Budgets.¹⁴⁰

The peer struggles for the state's higher education funds may warrant a further word. Without question the private colleges and universities felt financial strains, with inflation diminishing Bundy aid and the indirect support from the scholar incentive program; and with a widening gap between private and public tuition charges channeling increasing numbers of students to the State University. An authoritative study of the Rockefeller governorship during the period notes that nearly a doubling of Bundy aid and the Scholar Incentive Program afforded little relief to the private institutions. The same study

reports the State University's financial crunch: "At SUNY, enrollments began to level off, state budgets got tighter and funds thus more difficult to obtain, and inflation began to take its toll. The turnaround in SUNY income from state funds was dramatic. Between 1969 and 1970, the university, following the pattern of previous years, gained an increase in its state purposes budget of \$50 million, or 13.8 percent. Between 1970 and 1971 the increase, just under \$30 million (6.3 percent) was significantly less than the rate of inflation. As noted, leveling enrollment projections also resulted in dramatic alterations in construction plans. In 1971 the State University Construction Fund cut from its plans 539 projects valued at about \$1 billion.¹⁴¹ The Rockefeller administration had not only to contend with portioning out funds to both the "privates" and SUNY but also to the City University of New York. Under a 50 percent guarantee formula, CUNY was becoming increasingly expensive, especially given its open enrollment policy, the highly organized faculty pressures for salary increases, and a no tuition policy. Rockefeller became so frustrated with CUNY costs to the state, cutting into state allotments for other portions of higher education, that he urged, in his 1972 State of the State message that CUNY be absorbed by the State University. Boyer was stunned, noting appropriately enough, "the immediate question is ... how can we [best] provide excellent education for the greatest number of students? ..."¹⁴² (Arthur Goldberg, who ran for governor against Rockefeller in 1970 on a Brandesian platform to break SUNY into "smaller units" must have cringed at the idea of a State University of nearly 500,000 students.)¹⁴³ Calmer heads prevailed. The

governor appointed a commission headed by former United States Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel to study the CUNY problem to the State. Instead of SUNY absorbing CUNY its report called for tuition for CUNY students, and for the governor to appoint one-half of CUNY's directing board. In due course the governor won the right to appoint three of ten members of CUNY's Board of Trustees; and CUNY, in 1975, finally imposed a tuition.¹⁴⁴

Budget constraints were not the whole story of SUNY in the Boyer administration, although they were a large part of it. Under the new Taylor Law, which provided for collective bargaining between the State and its employees, the university administration signed a contract with the Senate Professional Association (hereafter known as the United University Professors). Also, the 1972 Master Plan called for the University to facilitate the transition from secondary schools to the SUNY; to enable students to more easily "step-out" of college for travel or work; to increase community service in the health sciences; to emphasize practical experiences in teacher education; to widen the University's international role with additional exchange programs with other nations; and, most controversially, to re-examine faculty tenure policies, "including the development of vigorous review procedures."¹⁴⁵ Little came of the latter proposal. For all of the Central Administration's frustration about "deadwood" in some of the units, especially in the former teachers' colleges, tenure was sacrosanct, especially with a new union machinery in place to protect it. The Central Office, however, could, and did,

address the tenure "problem" of its own principal administrators, the college presidents of the University. Following on the heels of the campus unrest of the late 1960's and the budget constraints of the early 1970's, the traditional tenure for college presidents seemed untenable. The new mood called for accountability. Henceforth, from January of 1973, college presidents of the University were to undergo, at five year intervals, an intensive evaluation in order to remain in office. Boyer put a positive light on the new requirement: "You can't stress the accountability aspect without also saying that a president will now have a healthy professional stability."¹⁴⁶ In addition to its college presidents, the University, in cooperation with the Commissioner on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, "undertook a major study of the central staff operations ..." Shortly thereafter the University, by then located in Twin Towers at 99 Washington Avenue, reorganized its central staff, eliminating 86 positions, at a savings of \$2.4 million. "More emphasis was placed on policy formation, communication, accountability, and fiscal responsibility, and less on day-to-day management."¹⁴⁷

One of Boyer's large endeavors as Chancellor was to induce efficiency into the massive University system at 72 campuses by dividing it into eight regions. (Shades of Goldberg's 1970 campaign pledge to reduce the University into smaller units.) Boyer enthusiastically commented that the reorganization represented "some of the most significant structural and educational moves effected by the university in its 23-year

history." Furthermore, said Boyer, regionalism would enable the University to function "more rationally, more economically ... [as well as] more efficiently." Councils, initially composed of college presidents, would be established in each of the regions to devise "plans of action". The councils would have staff assistance which might become permanent. The councils in each region would: cooperate with private colleges and universities, support the new experimental Empire College, and develop adult education and community service programs. Boyer hoped that the program would result in considerably less "criss-crossing of the state by students," and that the program would aid in getting the central administration out of supervising day-to-day campus activities by shifting many of such activities to the regional councils. The central office would then concentrate on development of academic programs and University-wide budget and personnel decision. "We have entered a new era," declared Boyer. However, "regionalism" in the University and in the state in fact failed.¹⁴⁸ Seventeen years later one recently retired central office official who lived through it all simply explained that the layers of the University -- the 2 year community colleges and state agricultural and technical colleges, the four year liberal arts colleges, the 5-8 year University Centers and professional colleges -- refused to cooperate in any meaningful way.¹⁴⁹ In the pecking order those above rather scorned those below. And the enmity between private and public institutions in any region precluded any united effort except in a very occasional voluntary way.

In December of 1973 Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller made his

leave of the Albany State House for the Vice Presidency of the nation, he thought, and hopefully beyond. It was a profound moment. "His years in Albany," noted the New York Times editorial, "Kept unbroken a bipartisan chain of distinction that began more than a half-century ago with Alfred E. Smith and Averill Harriman The State University is his proudest moment." The editorial poignantly laminated the Governor's fourth term, one which addressed less enthusiastically the needs of SUNY -- probably inevitably, given the conservative times, but never-the-less to the disadvantage of the Boyer regime of the University.¹⁵⁰

The latter years of the Boyer chancellorship were engulfed in a renewal of a war between the University and the Regents. Two hundred years of conflict between the agencies of elite, and those of the people had hardly dissipated. When, in 1975, John D. Maguire, the new president of the College at Old Westbury, wanted to establish a business-management degree program at the hitherto "untraditional" college, the Regents announced their rejection of the plan. The dispute had been brewing ever since Rockefeller left the governorship, illustrating his importance to maintaining the peace between the two bodies. The Regents, ever conscious of their mandate to protect the states private institutions of higher learning, in the previous Spring had ruled that Old Westbury reduce its projected enrollments from 5,000 by 1980 to 3,500. Boyer called the Regents' actions a "tragic disservice". A Central Office official agreed with Old Westbury's President Maguire's view that the matter was a "small pawn in the struggle between the Regents and our trustees" -- that war between the Regents and the University had been

declared. In fact, with Rockefeller gone, the Regents were flexing their muscles. However, the Board of Regents sacrificed the small pawn at Old Westbury for a larger one at the SUNY Center at Albany.¹⁵¹

A power struggle between the State University and the Regents reached almost unheard proportions in Boyer's last year as Chancellor -- probably unheard of since the Regents in 1949 tried to make the SUNY head a State Department of Education adjunct. Because of the declining job market for Ph.D.'s in the state, the State Education Department's 1976 Master Plan called for consolidating doctoral programs. It examined eleven academic areas and recommended that 26 of 129 programs in private and public institutions be terminated. The universities affected by the Regents' recommendation abided by them except for SUNY Albany which resisted efforts to close its doctoral programs in history and English. Chancellor Boyer, who had been contending with the Regents on a number of other policy matters -- enrollment projections, construction, budget review, and tuition levels --, was determined to take legal action, if necessary, to ward off the closing of the doctoral programs at the Albany Center. Commented Boyer: the State Education Department's "mandate ... says nothing about us [dis]continuing programs. This can only be done in the context of revising the master plan of the [State] university. It can't be done by administrative fiat." However, prolonged administrative deliberation and court actions, including appeals at the highest court levels, favored the Regents. The history and English doctoral programs remained closed. What was unthinkable in the

recent Gould-Rockefeller years came to pass in the Boyer-Governor Hugh Carey years. The Regents' power again seemed inexorable.¹⁵²

Master plans are, of course, political documents. The Board of Regents determined to make their 1976 plan stick even though it developed into a far-ranging "academic war." SUNY's 1976 Master Plan, although less controversial than that of the Regents', was perhaps of more profound importance to the state - - the strengthening of research and public service to meet off-campus social priorities; intense investigation of reform in undergraduate education; the establishment of closer links between medical studies and the humanities; a better servicing of part-time students; the creation of non-residence masters program; the expansion of teachers' awards and the designation of Distinguished Research Professorship; and "a renewed emphasis on the importance of strong and high quality doctoral programs."¹⁵³

The latter plank in the 1976 SUNY Master Plan probably was related to SED's rummaging the State's doctoral programs. If it seemed too little and too late, in the previous year Boyer had appointed a long term study group, the University Commission on Purposes and Priorities, with the evident aim of "forestalling unilateral academic interference by the State Board of Regents". More precisely, the Commission, to be chaired by Loren Baritz (formerly "leading professor", SUNY, Albany) was largely to "weigh the quality and desirability of all academic programs, examine the efficiency of administrative efforts ... , and seek ways to increase [the University's] 'decision-making

flexibility'." At the time Boyer declared that the self-scrutiny was being undertaken because, among other things, " ... a university must control its own destiny ..."154

The report of the Baritz Commission seems to have been lost in a turgid shuffling of high level Central office positions which marked the closing years of the Boyer Chancellorship. Such changes are, of course, not unknown in any massive bureaucratic structure, and in the world's largest higher education enterprise (and the nation's youngest State University), they reflected an inevitable, and salutary, "creative tension." In fact, the University, in the 1975-1977 years, perhaps as a consequence of the Baritz Commission, experimented with a plethora of administrative positions related to the core of the University -- where and how are policies determined in regard to research, graduate education, academic programs at the Central Office level, and academic leadership at the campuses' level. In the highest and best meaning of the term, "political", such decisions evoked tensions in the Central Office. A sequence of lateral and vertical positions of vice-chancellors and provosts were tried out as Chancellor Boyer reached for definition of the University's "own destiny" and its relationship to the Board of Regents. As the Boyer years came to a close life at Central Office of the University seemed more complicated, open-ended, and less sure than at the close of the Gould years.¹⁵⁵

On January 19, 1977, Secretary-designate of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare Joseph Califano announced the selection of Chancellor Boyer to be the next United States

Commissioner of Education. James F. Kelly, the University's
Executive Vice Chancellor would serve as Acting Chancellor.¹⁵⁶

"Epilogue and Hypothesis"

By the end of the 1970s the State University was massive, with its 374,000 students (237,000 full-time and 137,000 part-time) on 64 campuses, practically all of which had been newly constructed within two decades -- to the total cost of approximately \$3.3 billion. The University's growth, as noted by the foregoing had attracted the attention of the nation. More importantly, it brought higher education within commuting distance of all the state's college bound youth.¹⁵⁷ The most unheralded of the University's units have probably been the 29 community colleges which offered students two tracks, a terminal career oriented program or a transfer program to, either a private institution, or one of the University's four year units.¹⁵⁸ Of course, the "Centers" of the University attracted the most attention, with their stars, such as novelist John Gardner (Binghamton), physicist C. N. Yang (Stony Brook), physical stress authority, Dr. John Naughton (Buffalo), geologist John Dewey (Albany), and with their outstanding work in such areas as criminal justice (Albany), women's history (Binghamton), comparative literature (Buffalo), and music (Stony Brook). Some research activity at the Centers has been nationally noted -- the Atom Smasher at Stony Brook, the environmental influences on cardiopulmonary and cell functions at Buffalo, and the Atmospheric Sciences Research Center at Albany.¹⁵⁹ The four year arts and science colleges, would on occasion gain acclaim. They were at last shaking the "normal school" doldrums. The arts and science college at Geneseo would shortly achieve some national

attention (Money Magazine, U.S. News and World Report, N.Y. Times).

But, by the end of the 1970s the State University was generally viewed as not having achieved the success and national stature anticipated in the "Glory Day" of the Gould-Rockefeller Era. None of the Centers really achieved prestige status in the nation. Stony Brook and Buffalo barely made the top 75 research institutions, and only Buffalo was listed among the top 50 university libraries in the nation. Very few students outside of the state were attracted to the University.¹⁶⁰ None of the liberal arts colleges, excepting possibly Geneseo compared with the prestigious Eastern arts and science institutions they frequently sought to emulate.

One wonders why the State University of New York, by the end of the 1970s, had apparently fallen so short of its aspirations. Perhaps the foregoing draft history of the University offers some hypotheses to aid in the research and writing of the definitive SUNY history. It seems incumbent upon archivists, librarians, historians, educationists and social scientists in the university to prepare the records, manuscripts and oral histories to test the validity and meaning of these and other hypotheses. The ultimate "finished" historical study of the University would surely serve well the respective disciplines noted above; and hopefully, the best interests of the State University, including its future direction.

Hypotheses

1. For 204 years of the University of the State of New York (under a Board of Regents), has been the oldest and probably the most elitist state supervisory body of all higher education in the United States. In large part, the University was originally established to revive Kings College -- which under the title of Columbia University would become one of the great private universities in the nation.
2. The State's tradition of early "proper financial and other support" of private higher education, beginning with the chartering of Union College (1794), would set the stage for subsequent parsimonious state support of public higher education.
3. Boding ill for public higher education in New York was the diverting of the State's share of Morrill Land-Grant funding (the largest in the nation) from the recently chartered Havana N.Y. People's College (1853) to Cornell University, a predominately private institution.
4. Further subsidization of New York private education was the state's mid-19th Century financial support of teacher training in over eighty private academies in the state. Shortly after the Civil War, New York did creat nine normal schools, institutions mostly ill supported and generally characterized by the turn of the century as "notoriously low" in quality.
5. Because (by the end of the 19th Century) a high percentage of normal school students were attending such institutions, not

for teacher training but for low cost higher education, the state adopted an absolute no admission of students except for teacher training.

6. At the turn of the Century the state eliminated from normal schools most subject matter courses in favor of methods courses. Such a program was viewed as "adequate" for future teachers (but hardly adequate building blocks for a future State University).
7. In 1905 the Board of Regents and the State Education Department were united, assuring the state's single purpose commitment to normal schools as solely teacher training institutions and not as competitors to private colleges.
8. The establishment of Regents Scholarships early in the 20th Century served as an indirect subsidy for private institutions.
9. Paucity of state funds to normal schools was visibly evidenced by the startling fact that they were the last in the nation to secure dormitories (the 1940s).
10. The Association of [private] Colleges of Upper New York (ACUNY) set up and operated public colleges for World War II Veterans. The colleges were Sampson, Mohawk, Middleton, Plattsburg under a Board of Trustees, made up of private university and college presidents. Their intent was to avoid the embryo of a State University.
11. Governor Thomas E. Dewey, contrary to his economic conservatism, in 1948 supported the establishment of SUNY, in large part because of blatant discrimination against New York City Jewish youth seeking admission to higher education

institutions, particularly medical schools. (His concern about such discrimination was awakened by his own consciousness of the plight of the City poor [from his D.A. days] and by Harry Truman's vigorous 1948 civil rights stand.)

12. A high percentage of the State Teachers Colleges' boards of visitors, under the control of the Regents, in the 1940s opposed the inclusion of "their" colleges in the new State University.
13. The state teachers colleges were included in the State University with a "Gentlemen's Agreement" between SUNY and the Regents that there would be a ten year moratorium on State Teachers Colleges becoming liberal arts colleges.
14. Averill Harriman's governorship (1955-1958) was private institution oriented and lacked vigorous support of SUNY.
15. SUNY President William S. Carlson strongly supported for SUNY a one-campus "Flag Ship" approach advocated by the "Blegen Report" of 1958, perhaps SUNY's last chance to achieve a University of California (Berkeley) status. Frank Moore, the President of the Board of Trustees, and Governor Harriman opposed the recommendation. The stage was set for the dilution of SUNY graduate and research centers into four components.
16. Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Chancellor Samuel B. Gould worked in tandem to achieve SUNY's "Quantum Leap" in the 1965-1970 period. Their quantum leap was, of course, almost inevitable given New York State's position as 45th-in-the-Nation in per capita expenditure for public higher education.

17. "Bundy Aid" to private higher education in the late 1960s (\$400 for each undergraduate student and \$2400 for each doctoral student) diverted funds from SUNY. (Without question many private institutions were feeling the pinch caused by the comparatively low public tuition and high private tuition. New York, with its two centuries of Regents' encouragement of private education, was overloaded with private institutions.)
18. Peer agencies pressures in Albany (SUNY, SED, CUNY, Legislative Division of the Budget) always complicated SUNY appropriations and development, but especially in the 1970s decade of economic crunch.
19. The revival of the Regents' power manifested in the mid-1970s with the closing of the history and English Ph.D.'s programs at SUNY, may bode ill for the development of SUNY.
20. The awesome power of two hundred years of tradition of private higher education was evidenced by the fact that New York, one of the wealthiest states in the union, was in the late 1970s still in a "middling" comparative position in per capita expenditure for public higher education.

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